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January 2019
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SOFKA ZINOVIEFF *on her acclaimed novel, Putney*

Food for Thought

Writer Jennifer Joyce shows us how to start January the right way

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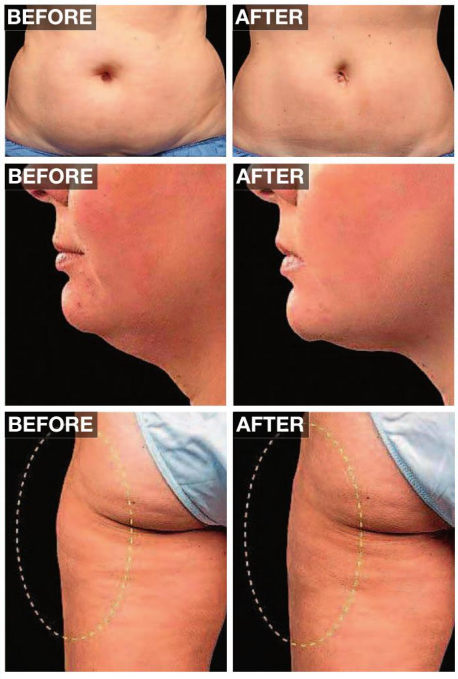

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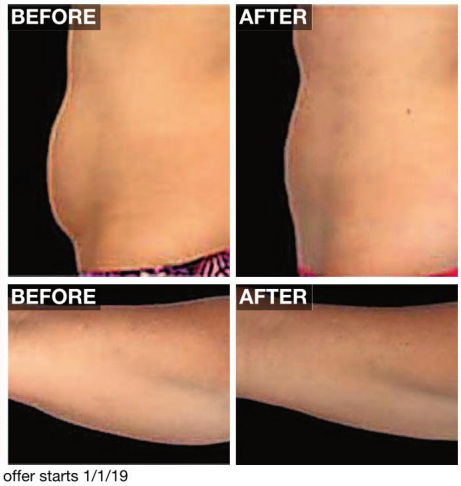

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COVER IMAGE: *My Asian Kitchen* by Jennifer Joyce (Murdoch Books, £20). Photography by Phil Webb.

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MAKE UP BY LISA FRANKLIN; LISAFRANKLIN.LONDON; PHOTO BY TOM DUNKLEY

JANUARY 2018

Letter from the EDITOR

Can you believe that it is the new year already?! 2018 absolutely flew by and I feel like I barely had time to stop and think about it before it was over. So I'm making a plan (not so much a new year resolution, as I don't massively believe in the premise, but a small plan all the same) to ensure that I slow down a little this year and really take the detail in of every moment – after all, life moves pretty fast, doesn't it?

2019 looks to be a big year as well, perhaps with some political and cultural upheaval at times, but I hope you are all looking forward to it as much as I am – there's certainly plenty of events to get excited about in south west London. I do like to start the year with some positivity, and this January it has come pretty easily for me because I'm thrilled to bits with our profiles in this issue. We have so much talent bursting out of south west London and we truly are spoiled for choice in this magazine. From the incredibly acclaimed author of this year's hit novel, Putney, to one of the world's best dancers, Akram Khan and then onto one of our favourite food writers too, Jennifer Joyce, we have three fantastic interviews to really inspire you at the start of the year.

I always find that there is something quite escapist about January, although I know that I am one of the few. Perhaps it's because it's my birthday month, but I don't buy into the whole doom and gloom January thing. I think it's a month where you can still hunker on down in front of the fire and escape the outside world a bit.

And for those of you out there who feel the same, we've got a bit of a treat in store for you this month with something of a travel special. Dream away your January and get some inspiration for your year to come from some of our insights into the Maldives, Athens or a variety of staycations in England. Just because Christmas is over, doesn't mean you have to stop dreaming and treating yourselves! In fact, I find that by thinking about my plans for the year ahead in terms of holidays and travels in January that I start the year feeling positive about my prospects.

Happy New Year everyone – I hope you enjoy the issue.

Bethan

Bethan Andrews, Editor
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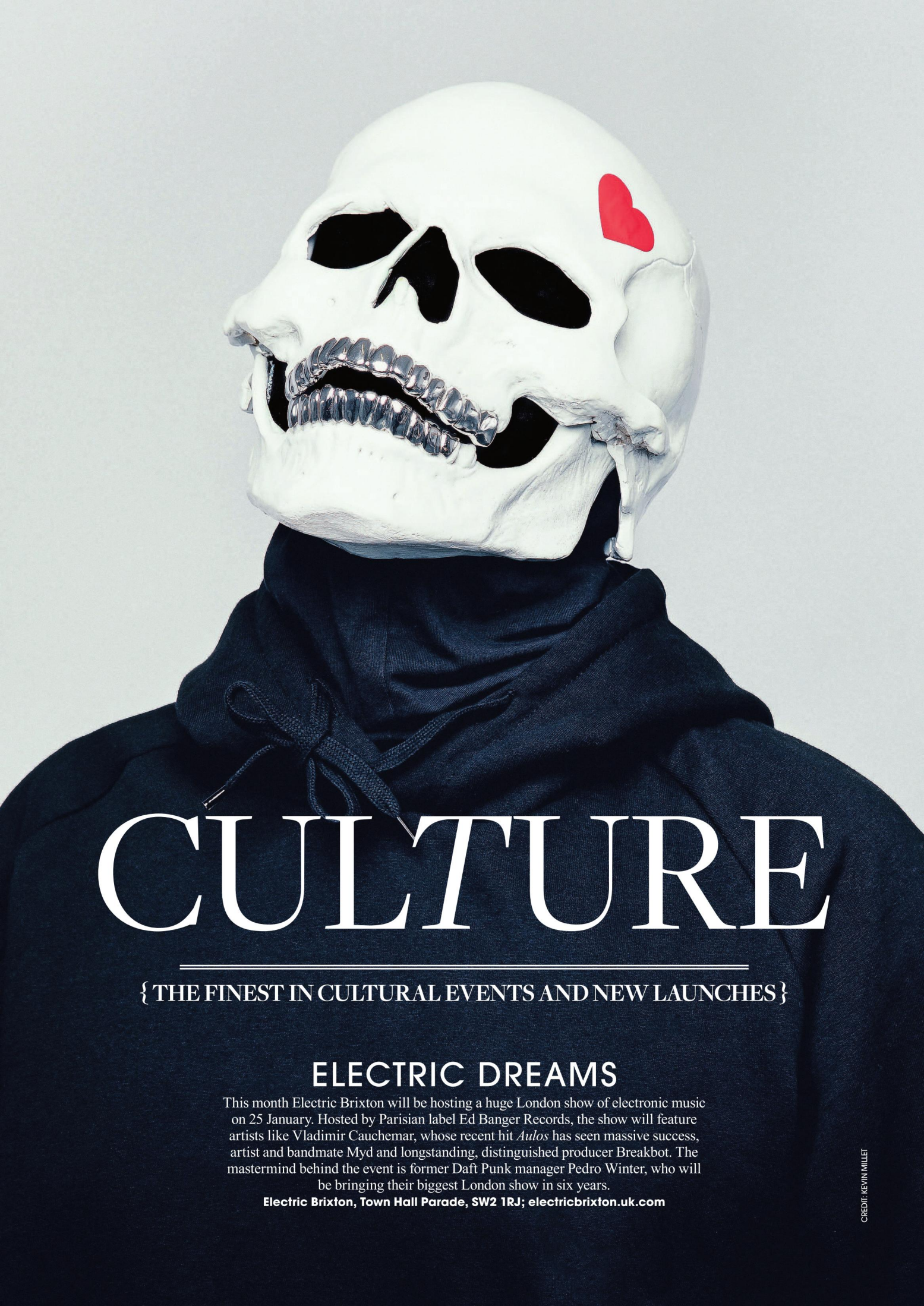


CULTURE

{ THE FINEST IN CULTURAL EVENTS AND NEW LAUNCHES }

ELECTRIC DREAMS

This month Electric Brixton will be hosting a huge London show of electronic music on 25 January. Hosted by Parisian label Ed Banger Records, the show will feature artists like Vladimir Cauchemar, whose recent hit *Aulos* has seen massive success, artist and bandmate Myd and longstanding, distinguished producer Breakbot. The mastermind behind the event is former Daft Punk manager Pedro Winter, who will be bringing their biggest London show in six years.

Electric Brixton, Town Hall Parade, SW2 1RJ; electricbrixton.uk.com

CREDIT: KEVIN MILLET

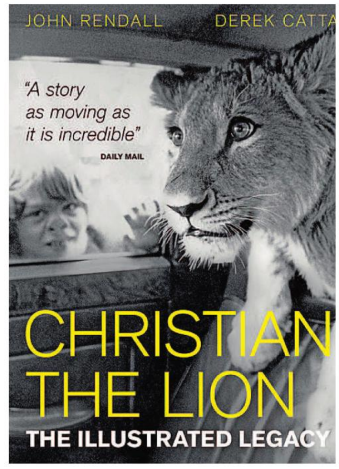
KING *of the* ROAD

In 1969, two young Australians, John Rendall and Anthony Burke, bought a three-month-old lion cub from Harrods. The pair named him Christian and for a year he lived with them at their furniture shop at the end of King's Road, Chelsea, where renowned photographer Derek Cattani began photographing him. At the time it was a story that captivated many, and now Rendall and Cattani have written a book documenting the period, along with Cattani's photos, to bring it to a new generation and inspire conservation of these mighty animals. In this extract, the Wandsworth-based photographer describes how he met Christian.

'In the 60s and 70s, The King's Road in Chelsea was a mecca for fascinating people and party invitations, and it was at a Chelsea party that I first met John and Ace. I was then a young freelance Fleet Street photographer, always on the hunt for an interesting picture story. When I heard about the two men buying a lion from Harrods and taking it for walks down the King's Road, I just knew I had to meet this lion cub. A few days later John and Ace invited me to Sophistocat pine furniture shop in the World's End to meet Christian. He was then a three-month-old cuddly cub, with sharp teeth and the most amazing eyes. I realised that I would have to get to know this beautiful little animal if I was to get good photographs.

Instead of grabbing my camera and shooting away, I just sat on the floor watching him, and waited. Eventually, curiosity overcame him and Christian inched his way towards me and then pushed his head against mine. John explained that this was a sure sign of welcome. Over the following weeks I made regular visits, slowly gaining Christian's trust and John and Ace's approval of my patient attitude.

They saw that I was not just after a snarling one-off picture for a feature, and offered me the job as Christian's official photographer. Christian soon accepted me as one of his human pride. To him, my camera became a natural extension of my arm and not something to worry about – or chew. Soon I was able to spend long periods of time with him, and he would just ignore the fact that I was capturing him on film. Some of my favourite moments with Christian were of him in John and Ace's flat: surely a unique location in which to photograph any lion.



As Christian grew bigger, so did the cost of his meals. To generate some income, John, Ace and I came up with a few fun picture stories that we could sell to the now eager Fleet Street press. The Easter chicks feature was published in all but a couple of the national tabloids. We never pushed Christian to do anything he didn't naturally want to do, however. Playing with a football in Moravian Close was a favourite pastime, as were fun car journeys down the King's Road. His gentle nature allowed him to be with children and friends alike.
It was my good fortune to be invited to travel with John, Ace and the film crew to document the first stage of Christian's rehabilitation with George Adamson in Kenya. As part of his London pride, we all took comfort from being together in such a strange and exciting land. Knowing Christian has left me with a lifelong love of animals and a special appreciation for the beauty of the wild lion that he was to become.' – Derek Cattani, 2018

Christian The Lion: The Illustrated Legacy by John Rendall and Derek Cattani (hardback: £25) is out now

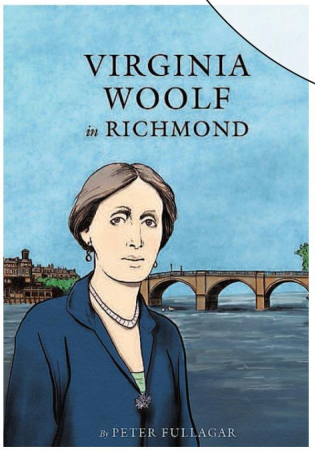
WORDS BY FAY WATSON; CREDIT: DEREK CATTANI

ON YOUR BIKE

Clapham is now home to a new cycling studio from Psycle London, the city's leading boutique fitness brand. The studio in Battersea Rise is moments away from the wonderful Northcote Road and is Psycle's first site in South London and its fourth studio in the capital. The 4,300 sq ft Clapham studio focuses on the brand's signature ride concept, with the ride studio featuring 52 state-of-the-art Stages indoor bikes. The studio also includes Psycle's popular Energy Kitchen smoothie bar with 10 seats, offering freshly made smoothies which are packed with specialty superfoods and natural supplements, as well as coffee, porridge and other snacks.
82-84 Battersea Rise, SW11 1EH; psyclelondon.com

FEMINIST THEORY

Although more commonly associated with Bloomsbury, Virginia and her husband Leonard Woolf lived in Richmond-upon-Thames for ten years from the time of the First World War. Now, Aurora Metro Books has published a new book detailing her time in the area called *Virginia Woolf in Richmond*. Edited by Peter Fullagar, the book follows that decade of her life drawing on information from letters and diaries. The new book also coincides with a major fundraising campaign for a full-size statue of Virginia Woolf in the area.
Virginia Woolf in Richmond by Peter Fullagar (hardback: £16.99) is out now; aurorametro.org/virginiawoolf-statue



Star approval

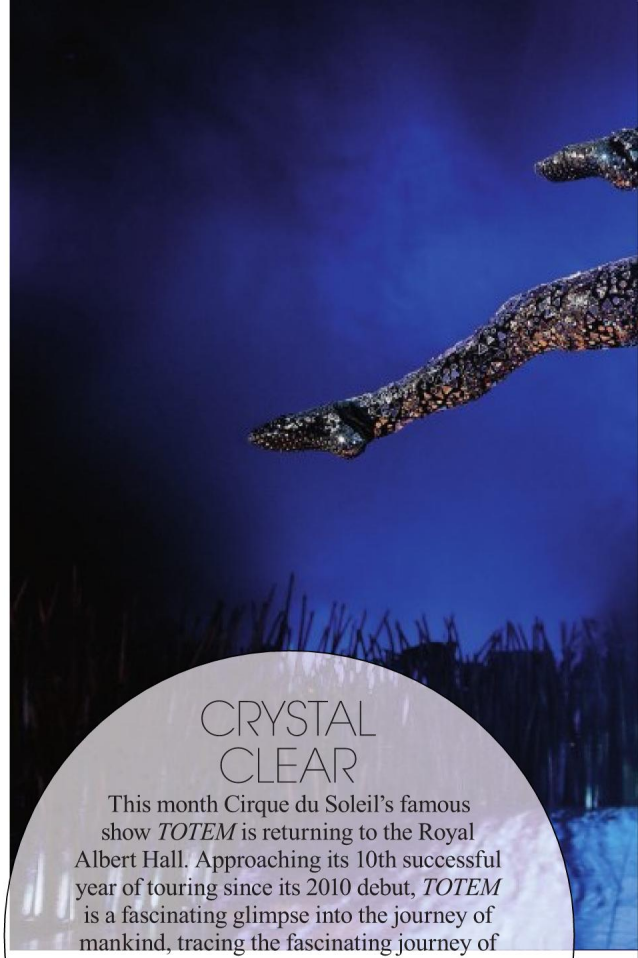
Local gem, the Omnibus Theatre in London has announced that Dame Judi Dench has become its newest patron. She joins a roster of high profile figures, including Sir Michael Gambon and Richard Eyre, from across the arts and theatre community who are supporting its award-winning Off-West End venue. The independent theatre, just off of Clapham Common, recently celebrated its fifth birthday and will be hosting an exciting programme of performances in 2019, including spoken word poetry *Father Figurine* from 4 to 5 January and acclaimed play *Hearing Things* from 8 to 27 January.
1 Clapham Common North Side, London SW4 0QW; omnibus-clapham.org

CREDIT: OMNIBUS THEATRE BY PETER JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

CULTURE

City of culture

The London Art Fair is returning this month from 16–20 January to showcase the most exceptional modern and contemporary art of our time. The fair invites visitors to see work by artists like Andy Warhol and Salvador Dali, as well as giving them the opportunity to buy pieces as well. Expect talks, tours, screenings and curated spaces at this year's event, including *Photo50*, an annual exhibition of contemporary photography; *Art Projects,* which features large-scale installations, solo shows and group displays and – within *Art Projects – Dialogues*, a guest-curated section of *Art Projects* intended to encourage and foster relationships between home and abroad.
Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, N1 0QH; londonartfair.co.uk

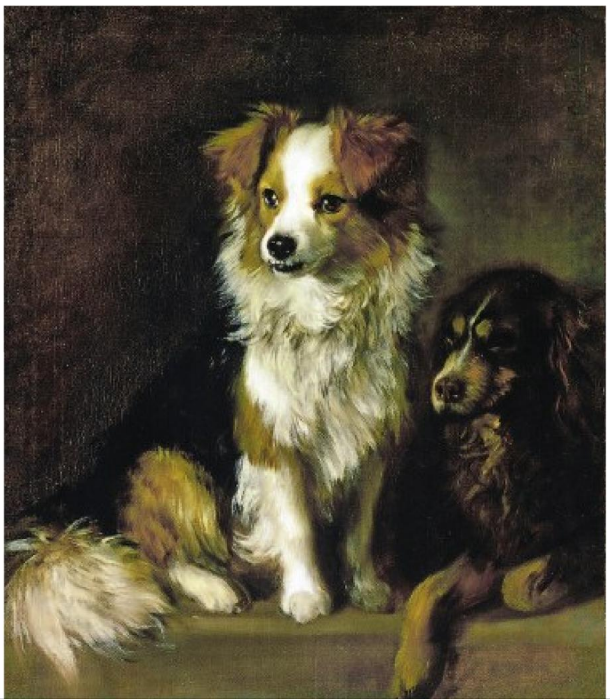


CRYSTAL CLEAR

This month Cirque du Soleil's famous show *TOTEM* is returning to the Royal Albert Hall. Approaching its 10th successful year of touring since its 2010 debut, *TOTEM* is a fascinating glimpse into the journey of mankind, tracing the fascinating journey of the human species from its original amphibian state to its ultimate desire to fly. Running from 12 January until 9 February at the Royal Albert Hall, the show looks certain to be a visual spectacle not to miss.
Kensington Gore, Kensington, SW7 2AP; royalalberthall.com

OLD MASTERS

You don't have long left to visit the National Portrait Gallery's much-acclaimed exhibition *Gainsborough's Family Album*. On display in the Wolfson Gallery, the exhibition follows Thomas Gainsborough's extensive work documenting himself and his family members. As one of the first British artists to regularly do this, the exhibition explores how this practice helped the eighteenth century artist rise to fame.
St Martin's Place, WC2H 0HE; npg.org.uk



Full of laughs

This month the Battersea Arts Centre will be hosting a special comedy fundraiser in its Grand Hall in support of the venue. On 28 January, the comedy show will feature a whole host of prolific comedians, including Nish Kumar and Bridget Christie, with many more names to be announced. The Grand Hall of the iconic venue was recently restored by Haworth Tompkins, after a fire destroyed much of it.
Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, SW11 5TN; bac.org.uk

BY FAY WATSON; CREDITS: SALVADOR DALI, PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY, FIRST CASE IN 1980, © IAR ART RESOURCES, COURTESY OF HAZELTON ART GALLERY AND THE DALI UNIVERSE; TRISTRAM AND FOX BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH C.775-85 TATE: PRESENTED BY THE FAMILY OF RICHARD J. LANE1896. IMAGE © TATE, LONDON 2018; OSA IMAGES / COSTUMES: KYM BARRETT / ©2010 CIRQUE DU SOLEIL INC; NISH KUMAR BY IDIL SUKAN

BRICK WORK

Brick Mini Format by William Hall and Dan Cruickshank is out this month on 21 January to celebrate the art of brick building. The pictorial essay takes an intriguing look at the world's oldest manmade building material, collating remarkable and beautiful brick buildings from around the world. As well as this, it also showcases fantastic early works of architecture, such as the strange remains of the Ziggurat of Ur (dating from 2100 BC) and the vast Baths of Caracalla in Rome (216 AD). The authors also feature some of London's most celebrated buildings.

Brick Mini Format by William Hall, essay by Dan Cruickshank is published by Phaidon on 21 January 2019 (£14.95)

LITTLE ANGELS

Marie-Chantal, the luxury children's wear brand, has recently opened a new flagship store on Motcomb Street in Belgravia. The new shop will be home to the brand's iconic Angel Wing Collection, wonderful baby gifts, as well as seasonal girl's and boy's collections. The business keeps it very local with designs created at Marie-Chantal's studio in Notting Hill. The woman behind the business is Princess Marie-Chantal of Greece, who launched her first collection in 2001 with a focus on her love for classic and timeless design.

4 Motcomb Street, Belgravia, SW1X 8JU; mariechantal.co.uk

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STITCHED UP

It's your last chance to catch the Tate's exhibition of Anni Albers' incredible work in the ancient art of hand-weaving this month. Exploring her pivotal contribution to modern art and design, this is the first major exhibition of her work in the UK. Visitors can discover her work via more than 350 objects from exquisite small-scale 'pictorial weavings' to large wall-hangings and the textiles she designed for mass production, as well as her later prints and drawings.

The Eyal Ofer Galleries, Bankside, SE1 9TG; tate.org.uk

A love story

Aspects of Love is making its London transfer debut at the Southwark Playhouse this month, running for a limited season from 7 January until 9 February. Directed by Jonathan O'Boyle (*Rain Man, Hair* and *Pippin*) this new, intimately reimagined production will mark 30 years since the original production of *Aspects of Love* first opened, premiering at the Prince of Wales Theatre in 1989. With music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Don Black and Charles Hart and based on the novel by David Garnett, the musical is set in France in 1947 and features the iconic songs *Love Changes Everything, Seeing Is Believing* and *First Man You Remember.*

77-85 Newington Causeway, SE1 6BD; southwarkplayhouse.co.uk

Way with words

Putney-raised author Sofka Zinovieff talks growing up in south west London, finding inspiration and her latest bestseller

Words: FAY WATSON

Sofka Zinovieff has one of those family histories that are crying out to be made into a novel. Born into a bohemian family in the early 1960s, Zinovieff's paternal grandparents fled St Petersburg shortly after the 1917 revolution. While on her maternal side, her grandfather was Robert Heber-Percy, who is also known as The Mad Boy, the lover of well-known composer, novelist and aesthete Lord Berners.

'I've been so lucky,' she beams when I bring this up. 'I really don't underestimate that I was given a very interesting family on both sides. I've mined my life quite a lot for my books.' It's also lucky then that Zinovieff had a talent perfect for the occasion, penning non-fiction books about both sides of her family in *Red Princess: A Revolutionary Life* and *The Mad Boy, Lord Berners, My Grandmother and Me.*

'I was given a very interesting family on both sides - I've mined my life quite a lot for my books'

But it's now for her second work of fiction that she has drawn upon her experience of growing up in bohemian Putney in the 1970s. While not based on her own life, Zinovieff's latest novel *Putney* is very much set in that era. And it caused quite a stir when it was released at the end of last year thanks in no small part to its heavy subject matter.

Billed as a modern day *Lolita* by some critics, the story tells of an up-and-coming composer named Ralph and his obsession with a young girl named Daphne in the 1970s. Splitting between the three perspectives of Ralph, Daphne and her best friend Jane, Zinovieff flits between present day and memory in her narrative as Daphne begins to confront the truth of her childhood.

'What I decided to do was to base it as strongly as possible in a kind of world, a milieu, that I knew,' she explains of setting it in Putney, where she lived as a girl. 'The storyline and the characters are not based on specific people but I felt that they kind of grew out of that mulch that was very familiar to me.'

Indeed, her family moved into the area when she was five from Pimlico, with her father running a company creating synthesisers out of their house. This often meant bands like Pink Floyd would be in the kitchen one day and her father would be telling stories of Ringo Starr the next. 'All of us children were running around with no shoes on, doing what we liked and going to very liberal schools, and the grown-ups were all having affairs with each other,' she recalls.

This is very much the world we meet Daphne in and I'm keen to find out what inspired her to write it. 'I think one of the major aspects is what I'd call the clash of cultures between the time that I was growing up in Putney and the way that women and young girls were viewed and treated, and the sort of world where I brought up my daughters who are now in their early and mid twenties,' she explains thoughtfully. 'And seeing the sort of things that men could get away with.'

Putney is certainly a difficult read that feels both a world apart from the present day

MAIN IMAGE BY GEORGE VDOKAKIS

Putney plays a huge part in Zinovieff's latest book

and extremely pertinent in current society when #metoo is dismantling preconceived notions of what is acceptable and cases of historic child sexual abuse have been steadily coming to light. This is something Zinovieff is clear she wanted to explore more deeply in the novel than headlines allow. 'People who do bad things – because Ralph was doing a bad thing – they're not necessarily these big bad ogre types,' she says. 'Ralph is cultivated, he's very charming, everybody loves him. We've seen it over and over again with so many successful people, celebrities and musicians and one and another, not to mention all the ordinary people... And how they do get into these relationships.'

Some reviewers have criticised how in the early part of the novel, Daphne is depicted as thinking she is in love with Ralph, which is quite shocking to read. But, Zinovieff tells me that she was keen to explore the issues underlying things like this and how our perceptions can be warped. 'We want to have these things laid out more tidily, we want it to be happily black and white so we know what side we're on, whereas in fact so many things in life are much more complicated,' she explains. 'The shades of grey are the things that I'm much more interested in.'

It strikes me that this stems from Zinovieff's background in social anthropology, which she studied at Cambridge University, before spending her PHD researching in the Peloponnese. 'I think that gave me a very good training for writing,' she admits, telling me about how she went on to become a freelance journalist after her doctorate. 'By the time I started to write my first book, I'd written a lot of words already so I think I very gradually became a writer rather than it being a lifelong ambition.'

'It was very nice hanging out there again and revisiting my old haunts'

Zinovieff now lives in Athens with her husband, but tells me she spends a lot of time in England as both of her daughters live in the country. And while she loves living by the sea ('the equivalent of having the Thames but bigger,' she laughs), she tells me that she does look back on south west London with a great deal of fondness.

'My mother still lives in south west London, she lives in Fulham, so I'm often in that part of the world,' she smiles. 'It was very nice doing the research for *Putney,* hanging out there again and revisiting my old haunts, going over the train bridge and Wandsworth Park. Remembering what it was like there living by the river with the boats going past and the birds and that very special aspect of living by the Thames in London.'

So with the success of *Putney* under her belt, I wonder what's next for Zinovieff? 'I haven't been at all good at establishing a brand as writers are meant to do,' she quips, but teases that 'next time around I'm going back to Greece as a subject and fiction, but that's as much as I'm allowed to say at this stage'.

We can't wait to hear more.

Putney by Sofka Zinovieff is out now (Bloomsbury Circus: Hardback, £14.99)

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COMING FULL CIRCLE

His career as one of the world's foremost dancers has taken him far and wide, but now Wimbledon-born Akram Khan is back where his journey began

Words: ELLIE FELLS

As I chat to Akram Khan, he is about to board a plane to Cologne for the next leg of *Xenos*, the solo dance tour that has already taken him from Toronto to Shanghai. Add to this the fact he's also just about to begin work on a feature film, something that he describes as his biggest challenge yet. 'I can't talk about it too much though,' he quickly adds – but there is no doubt that exciting things are on the horizon.

However, this January will see him venture closer to home as he brings his internationally acclaimed tour *Until the Lions* back to the Roundhouse in Camden Town for the final time. The tour began there back in 2016, so it feels poignant that it will be ending there, too. 'I'm ecstatic to be back,' Khan says. The production itself, though, is particularly special for him because his dancing career began with a role in Peter Brook's own definitive version of *Until the Lions* when he was just 13. 'Peter Brook had a big impact on me – it changed my whole way of thinking.'

'We are still interested in nourishing and sharing stories through the body'

Despite his jet-set career, Wimbledon remains home for Khan, as it always has been. 'My dad owned a curry restaurant on the Kingston Road,' he says. Growing up, dancing was very much a part of his life with his mother encouraging him in to Bangladeshi folk dance and Indian classical dance. These forms are still big influences on his style today, but Khan explains that it has also been shaped by many other early experiences, too. 'As a child my superheroes were Michael Jackson, Charlie Chaplin, Prince, Madonna… I draw a lot from them.'

He studied Contemporary Dance at De Montfort University before going on to the Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds, but a turning point came in 1999 when he met with legendary performer Farooq Chaudhry. 'We dreamed of making work that was relevant,' Khan explains – a year later,

UNTIL THE LIONS PHOTOS: JEAN-LOUIS FERNANDEZ

they had formed the Akram Khan Company. 'Today we're still interested in nourishing and sharing stories through the body, but stories from lots of different cultures.'

Until the Lions does just this, telling the stories of the unsung female characters of the Sanskrit epic, *The Mahabharata*. 'I'm really fond of the piece because usually mythology is written from the male perspective, which is completely wrong,' Khan explains. The performance takes its inspiration from a collection of poems by Karthika Nair, which recall the fate of a young princess who is 'won' in a conquest by feared warrior Bheeshma, who Khan himself plays in the performance. Although its origins are ancient, in telling the story of a voiceless woman and a community that rallies behind only the most powerful, the relevance of *The Mahabharata* remains today. 'It's exactly the kind of world we live in now, unfortunately,' laments Khan.

Using the medium of dance to tell the stories of the voiceless is something of central importance to Khan: his solo tour *Xenos* explores the forgotten histories of the four million colonial soldiers who fought in World War One. 'British history has been told by the white man and the victors, so the women and colonial soldiers have been edited out,' he says. His performance returns to these people their voices in a way that the history books, and other forms of modern culture, have failed to do. 'There was a wonderful critic called John Berger, who said that "never again will a single story be told as if it were the only one". That really hit me,' Khan explains. 'I knew that I wanted to tell the stories that have not been heard, that have been silenced.'

Khan's work caught the attention of Danny Boyle, who had been tasked with orchestrating the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympic Games. 'Danny wanted to remind people that they will die as well as live, so he asked me to design a piece under the theme of mortality,' Khan explains. Set to the soundtrack of Emeli Sandé's *Abide with Me*, the resulting piece brought together 50 dancers plus a nine-year-old boy and Khan himself, telling a moving tale of age and loss. Was he nervous before the performance? 'Oh yes, absolutely,' Khan laughs. 'If we got it wrong, billions of people would remember. I have a huge respect for Danny as an artist. It was a great privilege,' he adds.

PHOTO: MAX BARNETT

Akram Khan

After my conversation with Khan I am left convinced that he is not only a gifted dancer and performer, but a storyteller, and someone who is determined to make a difference, too. It is also apparent that audiences at the Roundhouse this month are in for a treat, and although *Until the Lions* has now come full circle, luckily for us Khan's journey doesn't look to be stopping any time soon. ■

The Akram Khan Company will be performing Until the Lions at the Roundhouse from 11-17 January; roundhouse.org.uk

Until the Lions returns to London this month

THE ANTI-GYM REVOLUTION

From aerial hoop to dodgeball, swap the treadmill for one of south west London's alternative fitness classes

Words: MARY-JANE WILTSHER

As the annual tidal wave of #NewYearNewMe content floods our inboxes and social media feeds with shots of rippling abs and perky glutes, it's tempting to hunker down with the cheeseboard leftovers, unfollow the gym bunnies and wait out the storm. Throw in that other hallmark of January, the depleted bank statement, and calls to sign up for a costly gym membership rankle further.

Luckily there's a plethora of fitness classes, collectives and studios out there that pride themselves on offering unpretentious, cost-effective and – whisper it – fun alternatives to that uninspiring half hour on the treadmill. And with south west London's abundance of green space adding more al fresco options to the mix, residents of this portion of the capital are genuinely spoilt for choice.

Whether your motivation is to learn a new skill, get to know your community better, or work out with your kids in tow, odds are your SW postcode has you covered. So, dust off those running shoes, put down the Mont d'Or, and join the anti-gym fitness revolution.

PARK LIFE

If fresh air and grass beneath your feet are on the agenda, try a Rabble session on Clapham Common. These sociable workouts offer what would otherwise be described as a HIIT session disguised as a game of British bulldog or dodgeball – essentially, the trainers want participants to forget they're exercising (how kind). In reality, though, attendees are fine-tuning all sort of skills, from speed and endurance to coordination, and can clock up a whopping 10K in one session. (3-game pack £19.50, unlimited classes £39pm; joinrabble.com).

'Dust off those running shoes, put down the Mont d'Or, and join the anti-gym fitness revolution'

For those wanting to get a little more serious, popular military fitness collectives such as BMF offer a host of high-energy, no-fuss workouts combining cardio, strength training and toning in some of SW's prettiest parks and commons. A signature workout is tailored to all ability levels, from newbies to pros, and there's also Active By BMF for

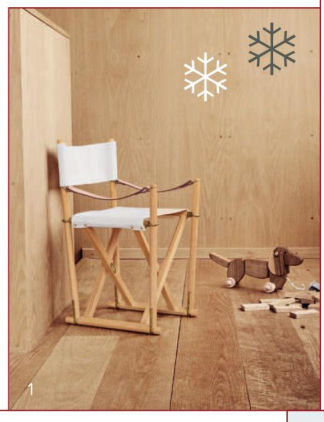
health-conscious older adults, which blends movement with resistance training and is suitable for complete beginners with no exercise experience. (Unlimited sessions £34 per month; bemilitaryfit.com).

Husband and wife team Sam and Jenny Warrington are the brains behind Swift Fitness, a friendly and accessible take on boot camp fitness with a strict no-shouting policy. Available in Fulham and Parson's Green, Clapham Common and Battersea Park, sessions are divided into 7-minute bursts of team games, calorie-busting circuits and core-focused exercises. There are some imaginative twists on the format too, like the Silent Disco Boot Camp. (Single session £15, block of 5 £60; swiftfitnessgroup.co.uk).

Keen to keep things simple? Running community Parkrun host weekly runs at a host of south west locations, including Wimbledon Common, Fulham Palace, Richmond Park, and Clapham Common. Each run is 5K and starts at 9am, with participants pitted against the clock rather than each other. This format offers an easy and rewarding means of charting progress, plus the chance to meet people in the neighbourhood. (Free, parkrun.org.uk).

carlhansen.com

JOYFUL TOGETHERNESS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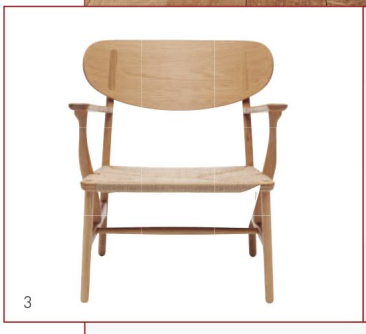
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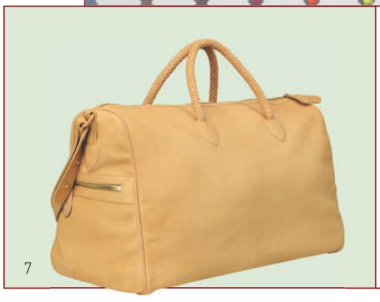
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Christmas and New Year is the season where we gather round the dining table or sink into a comfortable chair with a good book - both youngsters as well as seniors.
We enjoy togetherness and let time "stand still for a while". Here are some suggestions making the season more pleasant and joyful.

1. MK99190 Grandchild chair. Design: Mogens Koch. The iconic folding chair in children's version. Beech and white washed canvas. Retail price £ 506

2. CH24 Wishbone Chair. Design: Hans J. Wegner. On the occasion of Carl Hansen & Søn's 110th birthday, we launch a set of brand-new colors and a selection of the classic variants at a very special birthday campaign price in a period ending 31. December. New colours: Rosy Blush, Russet Red, Deep Burgundy, Oyster Grey, Forest Green, Deep Olive. Birthday campaign price £ 500.
Black painted oak/natural paper cord, black painted beech/natural paper cord. Soaped oak/natural paper cord, oiled oak/natural papercord, soaped beech/natural paper cord. Birthday campaign price £ 500.

3. CH22. Design: Hans J. Wegner. Beautiful and comfortable lounge chair. Retail price from £ 2,065

4. Calot pendant. Design Bonderup & Thorup. Dia. 650mm. Available in: Black, white and dark green. Exclusively made for Carl Hansen & Søn. Retail price £ 525. Also available in polished brass. Retail price £ 870

5. Champagne glasses. Mouthblown Murano Crystal created by the Italian glass artisan Nason Moretti. Exclusively made for Carl Hansen & Søn. Retail prices from £ 67

6. Sheep skin. Top quality long haired sheepskin from Island. Available in 5 variants: White, black, brown, multicolo-red/spotted and grey. Retail prices from £ 116

7.Travel Bag Liberte in Goat leather natural and in black from £ 484

8. Wool blankets. Made of 100% pure wool. Hand woven blankets from Portugal. Available in 7 colors. Retail price £ 120.

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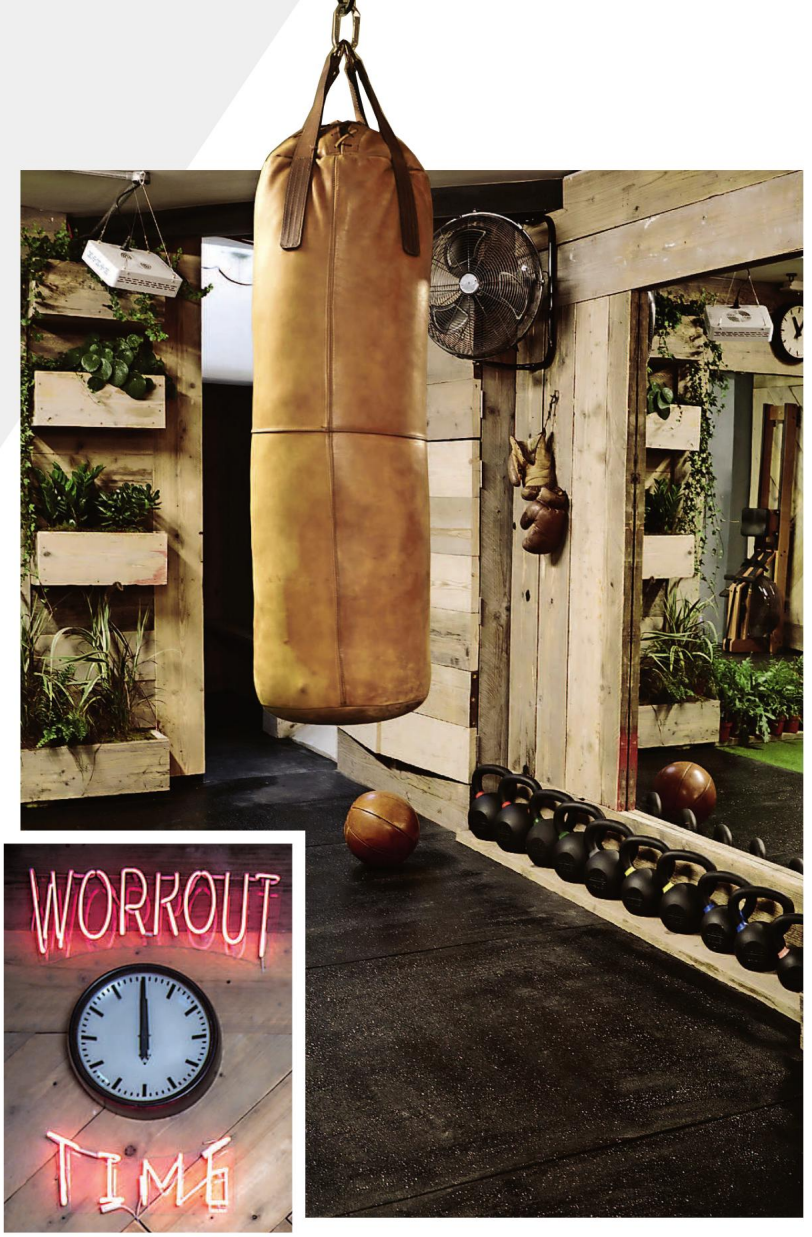
OPEN WATER

Hardy souls willing to wetsuit-up and brave the Thames' waters are treated to some of the best views the city has to offer. Canoe and kayak clubs such as Battersea Bridge Canoe Club (£5 for members, £10 for non-members; Batterseacc.org) and Putney Canoe Club (£5 non-members; Putneybridgecc.co.uk) paddle on the river weekly throughout the year and welcome newcomers once they have attended 2-3 pool sessions, which focus on core skills and safety manoeuvres including basic forward and reverse paddling, emergency stops, low brace support to avoid capsize and sweep strokes.

With its deceptively gentle pace masking what is actually a top-to-toe workout, urban paddle boarding has swiftly amassed a dedicated following in recent years. Board novices can master the sport with Active360, who offer low-tide group lessons. After some land-based training at Kew Bridge, participants head out along the river, drifting downstream with the outgoing tide to paddle past Oliver's Island, Chiswick Bridge and on into Barnes. There's a short tea-break in a cosy pub while the tide turns, before returning to Kew Bridge. Routes to Richmond are available for more established boarders. (2hrs, £57; Active360.co.uk).



IN A DIFFERENT CLASS

Baby, it's cold outside, and sometimes a warm inside space is required. Innovative indoor classes on SW turf include Australian fitness concept F45 training, which brings something new to the mix with its imaginative boxing-inspired combat classes. Available at F45's Fulham and Brixton outposts, the class (dubbed, a little confusingly, 'Brixton') combines elements of boxing, MMA-style training and self-defence, and will roll out internationally this year. It's a pacey, 45-minute full-body blitz, delivered with a heap of good humour and encouragement (Introductory 2-week experience £59; F45training.co.uk).

For classes of a calmer variety, fast-growing boutique yoga brand MoreYoga prides itself on offering an accessible style of tuition and, best of all, gives back to the local community. Throughout the year, the team host special yoga classes in aid of local charities, community groups and projects, many of which take place at their Brixton and Clapham locations, where the brand has swiftly amassed a loyal audience (From £32pm, moreyoga.co.uk).

From community helpers, to eco-warriers: Terra Hale bills itself as the capital's first fully eco-friendly fitness destination and its beautifully appointed Fulham studio offers intimate classes and bespoke personal training with a focus on sustainability. A 50-minute spin class here sees all the human energy converted into utility-grade electricity and put back into the grid, so participants can enjoy a high-octane workout while doing their bit for the environment. (Intro offer, sign up for any 3 classes, £30; for best rates book via RIG app).

For the truly adventurous, there's Flying Fantastic, an aerial fitness school on a mission to get Londoners air-bound. Taught by a team of circus professionals and available in Battersea and Wimbledon, these sessions give attendees the chance to master the art of aerial hoops, aerial silks and static trapeze, among other disciplines, and work the core muscles like nothing else. Timetables are pleasingly flexible to accommodate busy schedules. (3-class pack, £45, flyingfantastic.co.uk).

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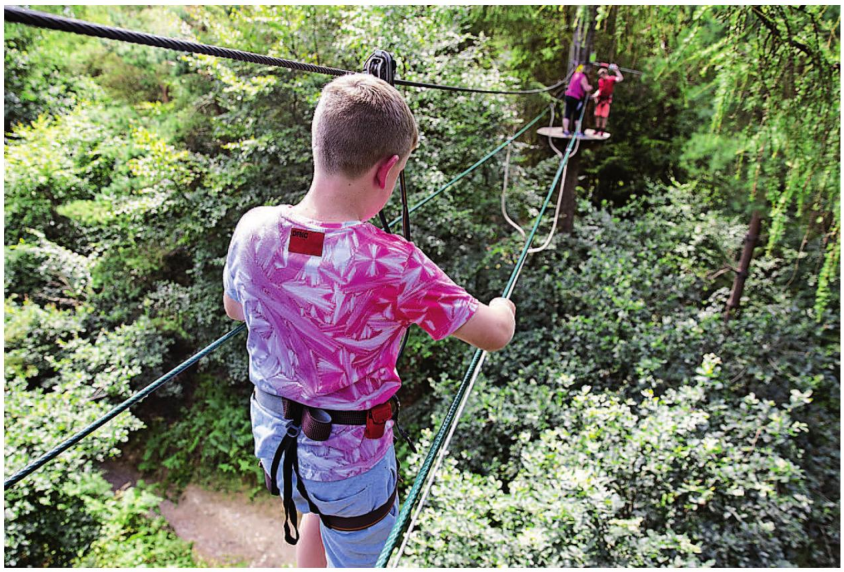


FAMILY FRIENDLY

Kids will love exercise dressed up as an adventure, so out-of-the-box thinking is required. That might mean shimmying up the walls of The Climbing Hangar in Fulham (adults from £8.50, kids £7; theclimbinghangar.com), or bouncing across the expansive trampolines at Wandsworth's Flip Out, (£8.95 – £12.50, flipout.co.uk).

It might even entail a trip to Battersea Park for a treetop escapade at Go Ape. Once up in the canopies, participants shoot along zip wires, hone their balance on the high bridges and make like Tarzan on the rope swings in an imaginatively plotted obstacle course. With each session taking up to 2-3 hours, this is a leisurely weekend option rather than a practical mid-week workout, but it's a high adrenaline expedition for all ages, and worth the price tag. (Kids from £18, adults £35).

Prefer to stay grounded? Parkrun's little sibling, Junior Parkrun, provides a 2K run for children aged 4–14 weekly on Sunday mornings. All meeting points can be found on the events section of the website. (Free, parkrun.org.uk). May the fitness overlords be with you...

FOOD *with* STYLE

Food writer and stylist Jennifer Joyce has a new book out, and it's set to be another success

Words: ALEXANDER LARMAN

If you're familiar with food writers and stylists, then you're likely to have heard of Jennifer Joyce, widely regarded as one of the leading figures in her area. She has sold over 200,000 cookbooks, of which she has so far written more than ten, and all of them concentrate on keeping domestic cookery accessible, fun and straightforward, without intimidatingly long recipes that confuse and frustrate rather than delight. Originally from America, she has made her home in Richmond, and has given a great deal of happiness to domestic cooks of all levels of ability.

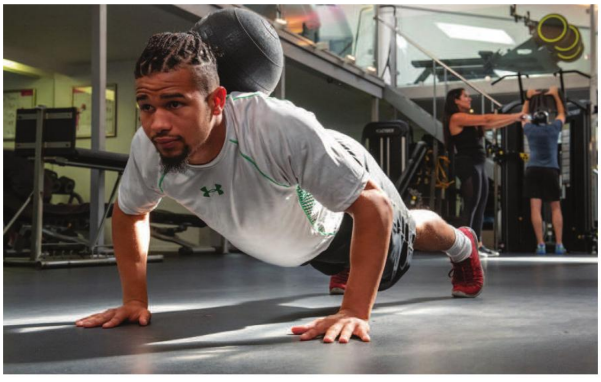
It's a career that has its antecedents in another very famous west London institution. As Joyce says: 'When I moved to the UK 25 years ago, I started working in Books for Cooks cafe, in Notting Hill. We would cook recipes from the books for lunch and I met a wonderful group of cooks who taught me everything I know about food. From there I started catering with one of the chefs, Victoria Blashford-Snell. She and I wrote a cookbook together and following that, I started working for magazines – both writing and doing food styling.'

It's comparatively rare that a food writer can also do her or his own styling – and vice versa – but Joyce is hugely accomplished in both departments. She puts this down to her strong sense of how things should look. 'I am a very visual person and when I write a recipe I think about what it looks like in my head. Food should not only taste good, but also look appealing. Texture is also another component I take into consideration, as you want contrasting bites. We eat with our eyes first and then taste, so why not make a dish look inviting?'

Her new book, *My Asian Kitchen,* is another display of mouthwatering yet approachable recipes that should get every domestic cook salivating. Its roots come in Joyce's deep love of Asia. 'I've made over 20 trips there over the years and for this book I wanted to recreate my favourite dishes. In addition, I also featured my own creations like salad dressings, snacks or marinades for grilling. When you travel you discover so many dishes that you would never read about in a cookbook. I wanted to show people all the tantalising foods I ate.' She claims that it's hard to choose favourite dishes – 'oh that's always such a hard question, it always depends on what I'm in the mood for that day!' –but 'if it was Thai then it would most certainly be Kai so gai, a Northern curry dish with noodles, or if Japanese, then a delicious bowl of spicy tantanmen chicken ramen.'

'When you travel you discover so many dishes'

Inevitably, as a Westerner attempting to recreate Asian cuisine, the question of whether this is cultural appropriation has to be asked, but Joyce rejects the idea entirely. 'My book is all about "cultural exchange", celebrating and



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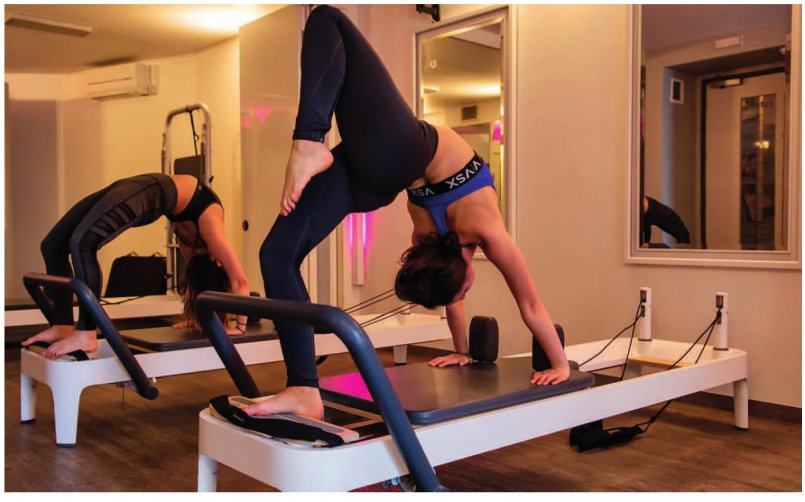

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showcasing the wonderful food Asia has to offer and teaching aspirational cooks how to make it at home. Cultural appropriation is an abuse of power or cultural exploitation for financial gain and I can assure you that's not the case for me.' Certainly, *My Asian Kitchen* is no quick cash-in. 'The book took me three years to write, test and edit. I used my knowledge from travelling and then honed it down in my kitchen. There are so many variables in Asian ingredients that I sometimes had to test one dish four times. Things like soy sauce can make all the difference. Japanese, Thai and Chinese soy all taste different, with the latter two being more salty and powerful. Their characteristics complement their own cuisines, but you would never use them in a Japanese sashimi salad dressing as it would taste wrong. I wanted to create a one-stop-shop book of demystifying ingredients, illustrations to show folding techniques and rock solid recipes that taste amazing.'

'I like to wait two to three years until something inspires me'

She was first inspired in her love of Asian food by two writers, Joan Campbell of *Australian Vogue's Entertaining and Travel* and Victoria Alexander, of *The Bather's Pavilion*. 'I loved how they created modern Asian dishes whilst maintaining the authenticity. It piqued my curiosity to use exotic ingredients like tamarind, miso and lemongrass.' Closer to home, she enjoys going to London's new wave of cutting-edge Asian restaurants: 'My top favorites are Som Saa for Thai in the East End, Kanada-ya in St. James for ramen, Baozi Inn and Jen's Cafe in Sohofor Chinese dumplings and XU, again in Soho, for Taiwainese.'

We shouldn't expect another book for a little while – 'I like to wait two to three years until something inspires me' – but, until then, Joyce recommends her perfect desert island meal. 'It would have to be Japanese. I would start with some crisp tempura with ponzu sauce and then move onto tuna sashimi with yuzu soy dressing. That would be followed by some miso and chicken ramen and a crisp salad with carrot ginger dressing.' It sounds delicious, just like everything else that the very able Jennifer Joyce is involved with. r

MY ASIAN KITCHEN BY JENNIFER JOYCE (MURDOCH BOOKS, £20). PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHIL WEBB

FOOD *REVIEW*

Brindisa, Battersea

It's been almost a year since I first visited Circus West Village in Battersea Power Station for my first restaurant review for *SW Resident* and the change in the area has been quite something to behold. It has transformed in that time into something of an established community, which has been helped in no small way by the wealth of wonderful restaurants that have moved into the area.

And Brindisa's new Battersea opening is no exception. Sandwiched between Fiume and the Wright Brothers, the restaurant opened quietly in November under the watchful eye of founder Monika Linton, marking the sixth London opening for the Spanish tapas bar and one of its biggest yet.

Given that Brindisa are known for their phenomenal hampers and deliveries of top-quality Spanish food, it should probably come as little surprise that the sourcing of their dishes are impecable. This was apparent from the off when my guest and I tucked into a delicious selection of our Ibérico charcuterie, including Jamón Ibérico de cebo, Salchichón, Lomo and Chorizo.

In all honesty, there wasn't a dud dish on the menu, with cured smoked beef, dark chocolate and Manchego cheese a clear winner with my guest, whereas I couldn't pick between the chilli prawns and the Huevos Rotos (the wonderful combination of broken egg, fried potatoes and sobrasada). If you have any room left, go for the almond tart – you won't regret your choice.

And while I must admit when I visit tapas restaurants, I'm often overwhelmed by the sheer amount of choice on offer, the staff at Brindisa were extremely knowledgable, recommending plenty of dishes. But the best recommendation was the absolutely divine fried goat's cheese and honey that we started with – if you choose any dish on the menu, make sure it's this one. To get into the fiesta spirit, I also suggest the Red Wine Sangria jug as a perfect accompaniment to the dishes.

It's certainly a cosy set up, with elegant decorations reminding you of the inspiration for the food you're eating, without overpowering it. The atmosphere on an early Saturday evening was lively, and began to pick up with plenty of punters arriving. And it certainly seems a good omen how many Spanish conversations we overheard when were enjoying our meal. Overall, on a cold winter's evening, Brindisa seems to be the perfect place to enjoy some Spanish spirit and forget about the ongoing dark nights. Make sure you book a table now – this is not an opening you want to miss.

Battersea Power Station, 25 Circus Road West, SW11 8EZ; brindisakitchens.com

RESIDENT RATING
★★★★★

WORDS BY FAY WATSON; TOP BRINDISA IMAGE BY STEVE JOYCE; BOTTOM BRINDISA IMAGE BY ADAM LUSZNIAK; ACAI BERRY BY JOAS SOUZA - JOASPHOTOGRAPHER.COM; DIOGENES THE DOG BY DANIEL OGUILEWICZ, PHOTOLARDER.COM

THE QUICK LIST

Don't miss out on some of the hot news and openings this month

Out with the old

South west London favourites Megan's have opened a new restaurant in Clapham Old Town, to join their existing offerings in Fulham, Parsons Green and Balham. Expect antipasti and charcuterie sharing boards to start, with Shakshouka or deconstructed pan kebabs for main at the dog-friendly spot.
Megan's Old Town, Clapham, SW4 0JQ; megans.co.uk

Music royalty

The much-loved pub, music venue and comedy club, The Bedford, has just reopened following a multi-million-pound refurbishment. The spot has played host to people like Ed Sheeran and Frank Skinner in the past. A new menu will focus on seasonal British produce, with a selection of tasty burgers on offer.
77 Bedford Hill, SW12 9HD; thebedford.com

Market roe

Simon Whiteside, of Hook Camden roots, has just opened up Roe in Pop Brixton, which draws on his seafood experience to offer up a unique and delicious menu. Expect everything from ink and Guinness soda bread to confit trout, as well as a number of other dishes at the spot.
Unit S38, Pop Brixton, 49 Brixton Station Road, SW9 8PQ; popbrixton.org

New tricks

Diogenes the Dog is an all new wine bar and shop opened in Elephant and Castle with the aim to bring a healthy element of cynicism to wine tasting. The menu features a healthy choice of wine options as well as some small accompanying plates.
96 Rodney Road, SE17 1BG; diogenesthedog.co.uk

Angel eyes

A restaurant dedicated to a 'bleeding' vegan burger has opened its doors in Brixton. Halo Burger, which bills itself at the world's first plant-based burger joint, opened up in December for vegans, as well as curious meateaters, who are eager to try out the new and unique burger offering for themselves.
49 Brixton Road, Brixton, SW9 6BT

Chocolate treats

Vegan pop-up The Meet have teamed up with Baileys Almande to create decadent vegan treats for London's Baileys lovers. Chef Dominic Taylor has used everybody's favourite Christmas tipple to revamp popular festive dishes into indulgent alternatives.
15-16 Lendal Terrace, SW4 7UX; the-meet.co.uk

Health kick

Acai Berry has just opened a new superfood bar on King's Road in Chelsea. The Brazilian superfood brand gained overnight popularity when David Beckham was spotted enjoying an acai bowl and now south west Londoners can see what the fuss is about themselves.
247 King's Road, SW3 5EL; acaiberryfoods.com

Grand reopening

Tamarind Mayfair, the first Indian restaurant in the UK to be awarded a Michelin Star, has recently reopened after an eight-month re-build under the newly appointed and highly acclaimed Executive Head Chefs Karunesh Khanna and Manav Tuli.
20 Queen Street, W1U 5PR; tamarindrestaurant.com

Designed to Impress

Having wowed south west London this year at the Affordable Art Fair Battersea, we delve into Kristjana Williams' secrets of success

Words: EMILY MANSON

Witnessing someone's career taking flight is a joy, especially when they've earned their success through lots of hard work, perseverance and sheer talent.

That's how it is with Kristjana Williams, the Icelandic artist who has taken the design world by storm. Not so much an overnight success, as a tornedo gathering momentum, her recent collaboration with iconic designer Paul Smith and design for the front cover of Coldplay's latest album saw her bring 2018 to a close on an incredible high, with more dizzy heights to be reached this coming year.

Self-depreciating and humble, her flamboyant, intelligent and multi award-winning art is filled with brightly coloured animals, birds, botanicals and curiosities. Her unique style has hit a zeitgeist that's seen a trail of artists follow in her wake, as well as high profile commissions including a 21st century tapestry of London, commissioned for The Shard, designing the legendary Christmas displays for Fortnum & Mason and creating pieces for the Rio Olympics.

It was, in fact, her unique style that led to her original collaboration with Paul Smith's team over four years ago, when Williams was invited to feature in his Heathrow T5 store. After regularly selling out, she staged her first exhibition with him in Melrose Avenue in LA.

'My style just seemed to really click with his clientele. He likes to offer his clients an experience that other retailers can't. When my work goes in, it feels like it should have always been there, so it fits well and one thing just led to another,' Williams says.

'I love working with Victoriana, maps and curiosities'

Their work together culminated in a show in the flagship Regent Street store last November, with Williams creating a map and story of two creatures that travel the world. 'I love working with Victoriana, maps and curiosities, so I made up a story about travelling explorers. It was a great excuse to use a lot of ideas which had been floating around in my brain for a while.'

The show went incredibly well. 'I'm so pleased people understood and connected with the story. Sometimes you do a big show and sell only two things, but it's been commercially successful too, so everyone's happy and I'm really relieved!' she adds disarmingly.

Her original collaborations with Paul Smith were, she says, created by looking from the outside into his creative world and what's he's achieved. But with this latest exhibition, she toured his studio where, she explains: 'He took me by the hand and we ran around this incredible cave of a billion things that could inspire you to the end of your days. It was so inspiring to see how fearless and crazy his mind is. Meeting someone so driven, passionate and full of mental energy is so incredible, like they're literally a little on fire. And you can see how that energy carries through ▸

to anyone who works for him.'

Coldplay's lead singer, Chris Martin, had the same quality, she says. 'He has that burning energy too and is the driving force for all four of them and then some! It helps explain their success. It's a wonderful thing and it becomes easy to see why people follow them and why they get the success they get – there's just no other way. They're so unquestionable and so driven.'

Although she doesn't make the connection, it's clear that Williams is built from the same stuff. After studying at Central St Martins, becoming creative director at collective Beyond the Valley, and creating the KSW Studio in 2012, she readily admits she's made a lot of 'painful mistakes', but her creative energy is also impossible to stifle.

'There is nothing else I would ever do and even if it was not successful, I would still have to do it every day. I just feel extremely lucky that it is working out and never take it for granted.' She never thought it would work out the way it has. 'I'm not sure if it's connected to my dyslexia, but my brain does work a bit differently and it's part stupidity, part resolute determination to do what you want to do that makes me never quite aware of the risk, so I keep going and learn a little every year.'

And this year is full of yet more promise. There are plans to work again with Paul Smith, as well as continuing her brand collaborations with Penhaligon's – where she's just been made creative director – and Royal Salut whisky, where the old heritage brand's fascinating backstory has fuelled her imagination for a contemporary redesign.

'There is nothing else I would ever do, even if it was not successful'

So what does she think defines the root of her success? For sure, her Icelandic heritage plays a big part. 'I think the elements are so strong and fierce. The creativity of growing up where nature slightly bashes you around the head and is totally in charge is one of those things you really only appreciate when you're out of it. But I think all of my work has Iceland as its foundation.'

Continual evolution is also key and her designs have more depth and are more intense than a few years ago. She says: 'Sometimes I think there are too many things coming out of my brain, but I want people to see things they haven't seen before. I promised myself I always would keep changing and I'm happy that people at the recent show felt really that.'

And, finally, she adds: 'As Paul Smith says, he is inspired by everything. From the tallest building to the launderette. He's just completed a wall covering with pencil sharpenings and it looks so beautiful. It just shows anything and everything can look beautiful.' ■

Williams and Paul Smith

kristjanaswilliams.com

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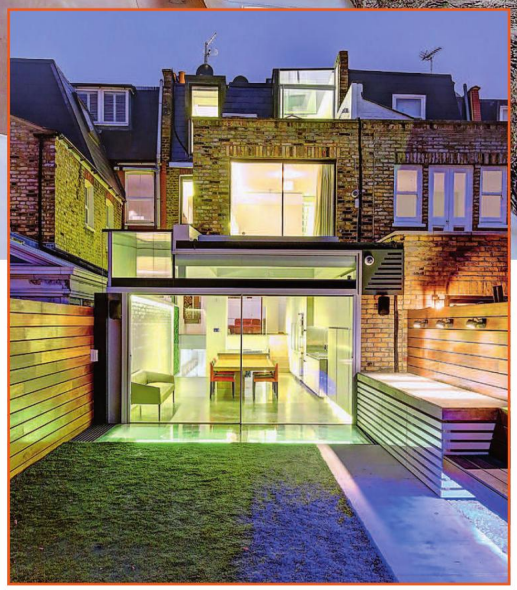

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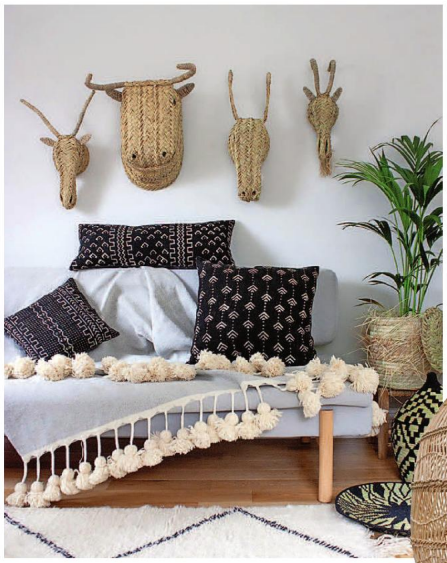
LIVE LAGOM

How to make the most out of the Scandinavian interiors trend in your own home

Words: BETHAN ANDREWS

Make no mistake, the Scandinavian vibe is a trend that is still going strong in interiors right into 2019. From evoking a sense of hygge and cosiness, to embracing the use of greenery and nature in your home, you can be rest assured that there are many ways to achieve the Scandi tone. And what is even better is that you know your space is going to look great once you have finished, because if anyone gets design right, it's the Scandinavians! It is a trend that has stood the test of time, and we don't see it going anywhere anytime soon.



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STRIP IT BACK

Use raw and natural materials to really nail this look. Not only does it allow the space to look more refined and often more luxurious, the use of natural materials adds another level of texture to a room and the tactile element is very calming.

Rattan is very in at the moment and perfect for adding texture

AU NATURAL

And while we are on the topic of going au natural, adding greenery in the form of plants, herb gardens and fresh flowers is also a sure fire way to make your room look as though it has come out of a high end, design focused Amsterdam apartment. They add colour to a room in a subtle way, but they also aid wellness in the home as well. Plants are proven to absorb harmful chemicals, purify air and regulate humidity, so they are good for your health as well as helping you to stay on trend.

Grow your own plants in a mini greenhouse

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LAPUAN KANKURIT; RUG BY THE DESIGN HUNTER PTY LTD

HAPPY HYGGE

Creating a sense of hygge and lagom in your home is the perfect way to achieve the look. Lagom means finding just the right amount, which is a Scandinavian approach to life and design, while hygge means to evoke feelings of cosiness. Combine just the right amount of warm textures, snug blankets, coffee table books and ceramics and you'll be onto a winner.

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GARDEN MASTERCLASS

Gardener and broadcaster Toby Buckland delivers his expert advice

FEEL GOOD FACTOR

Nothing lifts the spirits like a spruce through the borders – and it's not just the exercise of clearing tatty leaves and turning the soil that gives a welcome rush of endorphins. Science has shown that the musky scent of newly turned earth has the power to kick our winter blues into the long grass. The aroma of earth isn't simply that of rocks and stone but life – billions of microbes from fungi, protozoa, algae, nematodes and bacteria – so numerous that in every teaspoon of topsoil there are more individual living organisms than people on the planet. Handling and being amongst such abundance even just for an afternoon reboots and reconnects us with nature, and is the best antidote to the sealed-off world indoors. Tidying through the soil with a fork also makes space for the emerging spring bulbs. What could be better?

Plant of the Month – Camellia 'Jupiter'

'Jupiter' is my favourite camellia as its early flowers lead the charge towards spring and when its gold-centred vermilion blooms open I know that the end of winter has begun! Like all camellias it likes acidic soil, part-day sunshine and shelter to protect its large flowers from winter winds. Flowering early, the petals hold in the cold crisp air for weeks.

PHOTO: VECTORARTS / GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

WHAT TO DO NOW

January is a great time to plant trees, shrubs and hardy flowers, but always work with the weather, leaving spades in the shed when the ground is soggy or frozen. Cold days are ideal for clearing up especially on the veg patch, where the removal of all the old brassicas breaks the life-cycle of overwintering aphids and whiteflies so fewer come back in the summer.

Keep off your lawn during frosty weather as the weight of your footprints causes the ice-bound blades to rapidly defrost and turn black. Although this won't kill them, you'll be looking at the black footprints until spring.

If the thermometer dips below freezing float a ball on your pond, which as it blows about acts as an icebreaker ensuring air reaches the surface. My favourite job during frosty snaps is pruning. Once you start the pleasure of seeing clear bare earth and tidy and tame borders is very moreish. It's also very warming especially if you burn the clippings of roses in a brazier.

It's an ideal time to buy dormant mail-order 'bare-root' plants, such as roses and trees without compost or a pot. Not only does this reduce their cost, it also cuts down on the unrecyclable plastic containers. Plant as soon as they are delivered, or if the ground is frozen or it's raining unwrap the tops leaving the roots covered in compost or until the weather improves.

If you have a garden question send to @tobybuckland via Twitter

IN WITH THE OLD

Give your rooms a new lease of life, with these handy tips on adding antique furniture to your home

Words: JUDITH PALMER

Feeling like a New Year spruce up, but don't have the time to completely redecorate? Why not use a piece of antique furniture to change the look of your room, without having to get the decorators in…

ENTRANCE HALL

Making a statement with an antique coat stand is a great way to impress any visitors that walk through your door, or a vintage wooden bench makes a great place to store shoes, with a place to sit and put them on too. If, however, space is tight, an alternative option is to hang up your favourite family photos in antique gilt frames. Black and white photos work best as they mix modern with vintage.

KITCHEN

The kitchen is the heart of the home, but can be expensive to renovate, so complement your modern cupboards and drawers with elegant and ornate light fixtures. If you have space, a chandelier will make a powerful statement and it's certain to become a talking point when you have visitors.

ABOVE: Make a statement in your entrance hall

RIGHT: Vintage taps are in demand

LEFT: A chandelier can add the wow factor in a kitchen

DINING ROOM

If comfort is more important to you than style, then antique dining chairs might not be a great option. However putting modern chairs around a rustic wooden dining table creates terrific contrast and style, without the discomfort. Also an antique carriage clock or candelabra make eye-catching centre pieces on any table.

BEDROOM

Add a little bit of elegance to the boudoir with an antique chair – don't be put off by the upholstery as this can be changed for a modern fabric. Instead look for stylish legs, or extra filigree work on the arms, these will really stand out in a modern setting. If you don't have room for a chair, how about a gilt frame French mirror: they add instant style without taking up any floor space.

BATHROOM

An antique free standing bath is something most homeowners dream of, but good quality ones can often be expensive and hard to find. So if budgets are tight why not opt for a modern bath with vintage fittings. Brass taps, towel rails, and radiators can add a splash of vintage style in a clean white bathroom.

LIVING ROOM

Rather than spend big on a vintage sofa, which while looking fabulous isn't always the comfiest place to snuggle down, invest in an elegant side table or dresser instead. They offer great storage solutions as well as adding style to your room, but when you're shopping make sure to have accurate room measurements, so you know what will fit. Don't be put off by handles and hinges either, as these can always be swapped for modern alternatives.

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MAX IT OUT

Be bold and team vibrant patterns, prints and pigments for a stand-out decorating look that proves more really can be more

Story: KARA O'REILLY

Blue tones

Graham & Brown has designated this rich teal as its colour of the year for 2019. Here it shows how dramatic it can be when used to create an all-enveloping feel. The wallpaper breaks up the wrap-round effect with a shot of Chinoiserie-influenced pattern.

Tiru teal emulsion, £38 per 2.5l; Tori teal wallpaper, £50 per 10m roll, both grahambrown.com

Bold as brass

Botanicals, a bright bathtub, brass accents and a bold chevron floor? On paper it really shouldn't work, but this dramatic design by Maurizio Pellizoni pulls it off.

Tweed bath with gloss painted exterior, from £3,420; The Leawood floor-standing brass bath and shower mixer, from £3,090; freestanding brass towel rail, from £4,620, all drummonds-uk.com

New Victorians

House of Hackney is celebrated as the pioneer of the new maximalist approach to decorating, with collections that embrace 19th century influences, as well as plenty of dramatic colourways. This is the place to head if you want your curtains to match your walls to co-ordinate with your cushions – you get the drift…

Majorelle wallpaper in petrol, £185 per 180x300cm roll; Majorelle velvet, £120 per m; Ananas black lamp base, £495, with Daley lampshade in Palme Cashmir, £140; Saber Bloomsbury loveseat in Midnight, £3,495; Saber jacquard cushion in Midnight, £165; De Beauvoir screen in Mamounia, £3,295, all houseofhackney.com

Soft modern

The new maximalism is as much about colour – try power pastels – and tactile finishes – such as brass, marble, velvet – as it is about pattern. Mix up luxe-leaning materials for a look that makes a subtler nod to the whole mood.

Paipai sofas, from £3,492 each; Ecume rug, £1,038; Parachute pendant lights, from £244 each; Cupidon tables, £496 each; Oxydation tables, from £608 each; Ura mirror, from £327, all ligne-roset.com

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Make an Entrance

Hallways are frequently one of the darkest spaces in a home, so why not embrace that fact and make a feature of it by decorating in an over-scaled floral? It will certainly make a strong first impression on any visitors.
Matilija Moonlight wallpaper by Lake August, £180 per 27in x 5 yd roll, thefabriccollective.com

Boldly botanical

Cole & Son's latest collection, Botanical Botanica, features 16 prints influenced by the English countryside, whether that's classic cottage gardens or rolling meadowlands. The prints include floral favourites such as lilac, camellias and sweet peas, as well as this lovely woodland design.
Woodland wallpaper, £325 per 10m roll, cole-and-son.com

Power flowers

Still feeling nervous about combining different prints? A way to get round this is by selecting one pattern you love – such as this fabulous floral – and teaming up a couple of its available colourways.
V&A Thurloe sofa in Love Birds Saffron, £2,999, sofaworkshop.com

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In the pink

Design studio 2LG teamed up with kitchen specialists John Lewis of Hungerford and lighting specialists Cameron Design House to come up with this joyous kitchen that demonstrates the utility areas of the home can be fun as well as functional.
Capsule light by Cameron Design House with 2LG Studio, from £2,600, camerondesignhouse.com. The Rise Kitchen by 2LG Studio for John Lewis of Hungerford, to order, john-lewis.co.uk. Stanley table by Olivia Aspinall x 2LG Studio, to order, olivia-aspinall.com. Afteroom dining chairs by Menu, £321 each, twentytwentyone.com. Matt emulsion paint, £46 for 2.5l, mylands.com

Bright and beautiful

Fashion designer Matthew Williamson is known for his kaleidoscopic prints that reference a whole host of global influences. His vibrant collections for wallpaper house Osborne & Little bring his signature aesthetic into the home.
Talavera wallpaper, £76 per 10m roll; Cushions made from Talavera fabric, £64 per m; both osborneandlittle.com

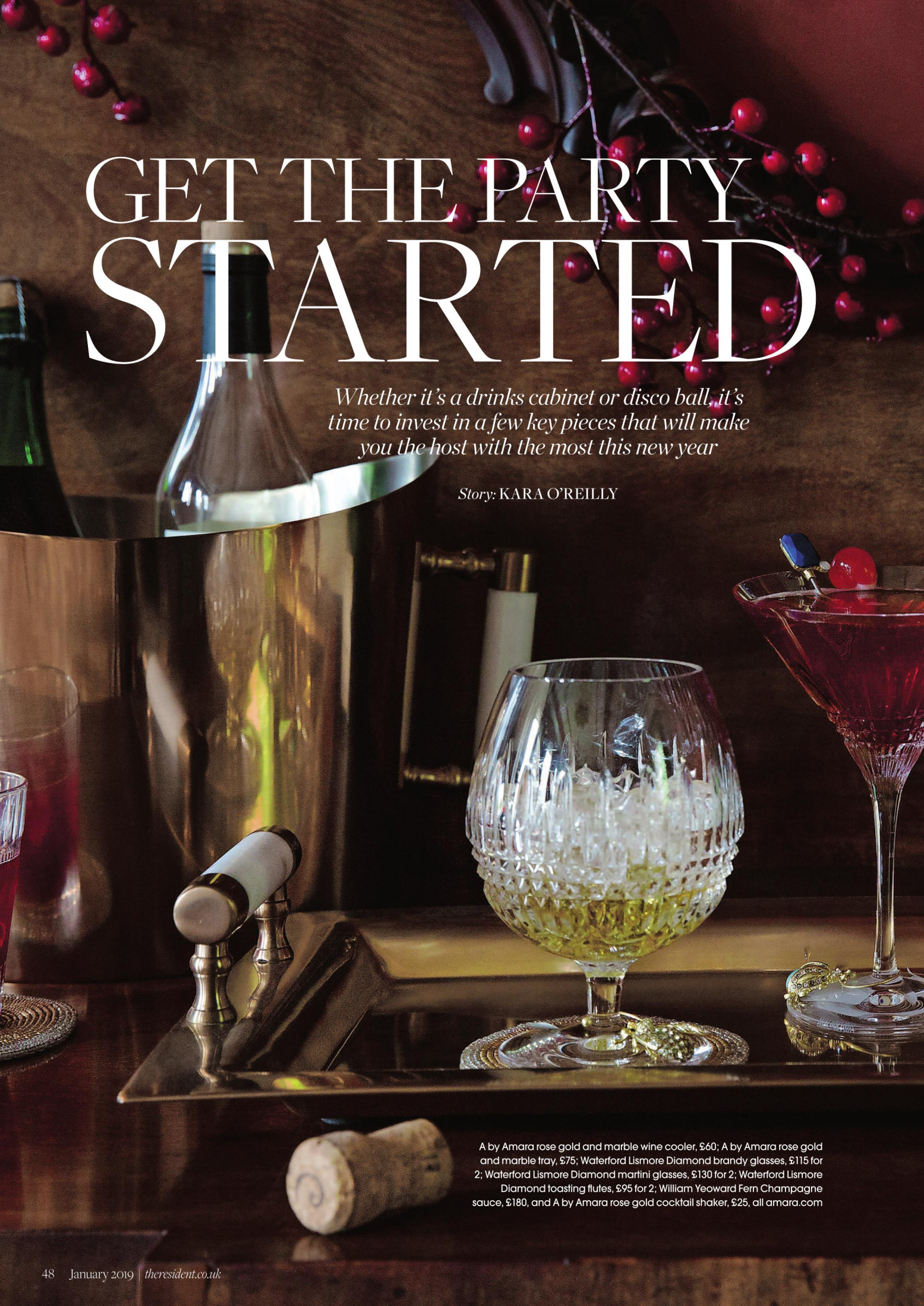
Mid-century magic

The new maximalism isn't just about pattern – it's about styling up your stuff as well. A cleverly curated selection of *objets* in co-ordinating colours is a way of adding interest to all manner of spots about the house.
Harlequin credenza, £3,950; Globo lamp, £995; Ronchamp vases, from £58 each; Bel Air mega scoop vase, £395; all uk.jonathanadler.com

GET THE PARTY STARTED

Whether it's a drinks cabinet or disco ball, it's time to invest in a few key pieces that will make you the host with the most this new year

Story: KARA O'REILLY



A by Amara rose gold and marble wine cooler, £60; A by Amara rose gold and marble tray, £75; Waterford Lismore Diamond brandy glasses, £115 for 2; Waterford Lismore Diamond martini glasses, £130 for 2; Waterford Lismore Diamond toasting flutes, £95 for 2; William Yeoward Fern Champagne sauce, £180, and A by Amara rose gold cocktail shaker, £25, all amara.com

1. Black and gold pinwheel decorations, £14.99 for 6, *partypieces.co.uk* 2. Disco ball, from £140, *rockettstgeorge.co.uk* 3. Seeded glass tealight holder in Smoke, £4, *marksandspencer.com* 4. Serve punch bowl and ladle, £80, *lsa-international.com* 5. Vintage martini glass, £16 for 2, *nudeglass.com* 6. Marble condiment set, £36, *oliverbonas.com* 7. Glacier whisky rocks, £16 for 6, *debenhams.com* 8. Gold-plated cocktail shaker, £45, *grahamandgreen.co.uk* 9. Victrola Park Avenue 5-1 Bluetooth briefcase-style turntable Music Centre with built-In stereo speakers and USB conversion, £159.99, *amazon.co.uk/launchpad*

10. Lithe ottoman in orange velvet, from £950, *rume.co.uk* **11.** Glitterati mini party poppers, £5 for 10, *talkingtables.co.uk* **12.** Twisted glass jug, £45, oka.com **13.** Rocket vodka decanter, £198, *uk.jonathanadler.com* **14.** Scented candle, from £50, *victoriacator.com* **15.** Hudson Small Bar in Fury Black, £3,125, *timothyoulton.com* **16.** Gold wine drinks stand, £134, *audenza.com* **17.** Muuto Nerd barstool, £345, *nest.co.uk* **18.** Mima record table, £795, *johneadon.co.uk* **19.** Soiree bar set, £30, *habitat.co.uk* **20.** Gold compressed air confetti cannon, £1.99, *gingerray.co.uk* **21.** Cora drinks trolley in brass, £169, *made.com* **22.** Dot string lights, £40, *coxandcox.co.uk* **23.** Cuisinart electric wine opener, £45, *johnlewis.com* **24.** Master Cleanse glasses, £128 for 4, *uk.jonathanadler.com* **25.** Chandler stool in orange velvet, £295, *andrewmartin.co.uk* **26.** Pascali bar cabinet, £549, *atkinandthyme.co.uk*

Popstar bar, £2,550,
busterandpunch.com

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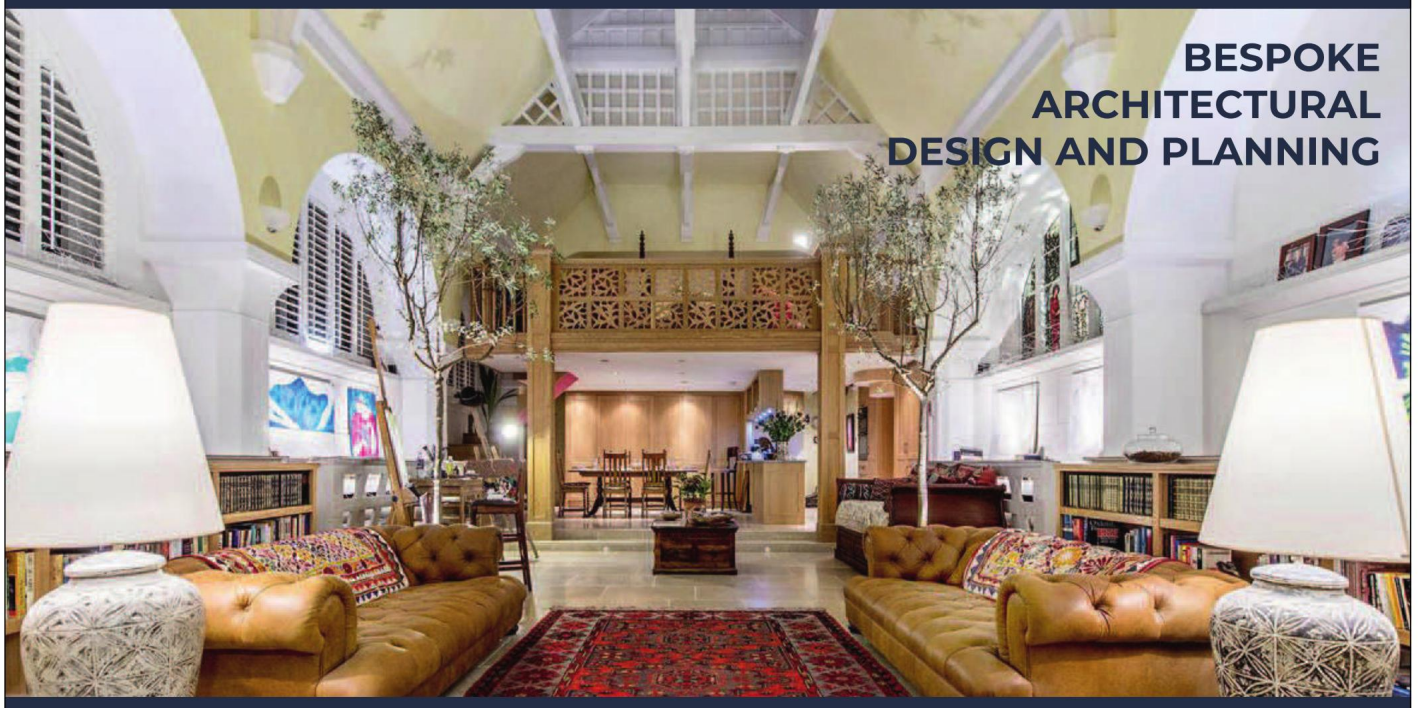

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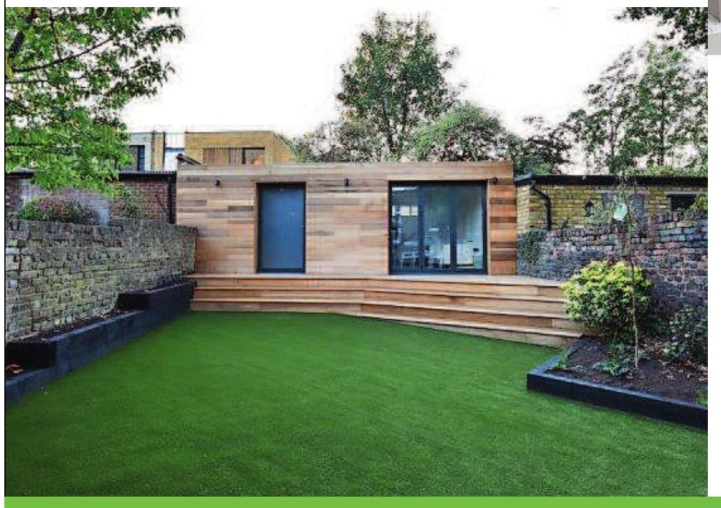

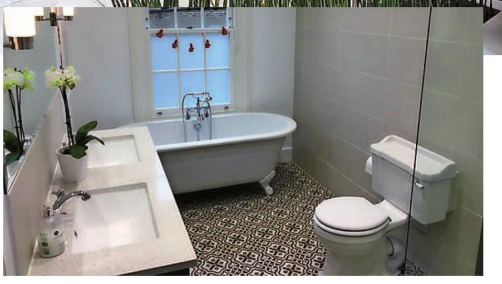

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HOMES INSIDER

Kara O'Reilly rounds up the latest in interiors

KARA'S CHOICE

New vintage

As someone who periodically loses hours of my life perusing original mid-century pieces by Brit design duo John and Sylvia Reid for Stag online, I was delighted to stumble across re-issues of some of the original designs at Clerkenwell Design Week. A joint venture by scions of both dynasties, the first 13 pieces of the S range are now finally available to purchase. I'm just waiting for them to turn their attention to the smaller C range dressing table I have been hankering after...

Prices from £449 for a dining chair, see johnandsylviareid.com for more information and to order

Person of interest

MATT KEHOE

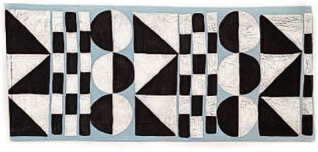
Matt Kehoe is one of those behind-the-scenes designers whose work you will recognise, although you might not know of him. He is the man responsible for the jewel-hued Mixology range of glassware that has given a contemporary twist to heritage brand Waterford Crystal. Waterford-born himself and following studies in Industrial Design, he became the youngest ever person to join the company's design department and in the subsequent years has worked his way up through the ranks to Design Director. His latest collection is the new Gin Journey range for all the artisan gin lovers out there – and there are plenty of them – while the Diamond Line series has a timeless old Hollywood feel to it. Whatever your poison, all are future heirloom pieces that will give a lift to any festive gathering – after all, there really is nothing like light reflecting off crystal to bring sparkle to a celebration.

Prices from £75 for a pair of Gin Journey balloon glasses (waterford.co.uk)

Hot off the press

Good housekeeping

Anna Murray and Grace Winteringham, the duo behind pattern powerhouse, Patternity, have teamed up with Tribal Textiles, a Zambian-based organisation, to create a range of hand-painted kitchen textiles and homewares emblazoned with their signature geometric prints. Tribal Textiles supports more than 100 artisan workers to earn living wages and the collection uses the traditional technique of starch batik to create the crackle-effect designs. Just the thing to give you a lift as the January blues set in, plus you will be aiding a good cause at the same time – so win, win.



Prices start at £28, shop.tribaltextiles.co.zm

Mini trend

Striking starbursts

Starburst coffee table, £499, westelm.co.uk

Decorative prickle ball, £35, audenza.com

Starburst chandelier, £595, grahamandgreen.co.uk

The Pace Setters

What's set to be big in the fitness industry in 2019?

Words: LYDIA TEWKESBURY

Go on THE TRIP in 2019

In the age of social media, choosing how to get fit can be a confusing business. Which workouts are worth the price tag, and which are only a passing fad? We break down the 2019 trends worth trying…

VR takeover

Virtual reality fitness has arrived in the form of THE TRIP, an immersive workout experience from fitness innovator Les Mills. Currently only available at a handful of locations around the UK, THE TRIP is an intense 40 minute spin class where participants traverse digital worlds by cycling with a cinema-scale screen and sound system. Explore futuristic cities and magical landscapes – all while getting your sweat on. Research shows that participants work as hard as they would during a regular spin, but as a result of the immersive nature of the class, perceive their effort levels to be less. VR for fitness has been increasing in popularity over the last couple of years, but with THE

ABOVE:
Speedflex

TRIP, Les Mills has given it some mass market potential that will surely see keen cyclists flocking to a class.

All effort, all the time

If the last couple of years has shown us anything, it's that high intensity interval training (HIIT) is here to stay. The Speedflex machine was built on the principles of HIIT – bursts of high intensity exercise followed by short recovery periods – but with the user choosing the level of intensity they wish to work at. The Speedflex is a unique piece of workout equipment in that its users don't experience the momentum they might with other resistance machines; instead they are required to apply force throughout the entire exercise. Speedflex recently teamed up with Bannatyne Health Clubs to bring the machine to their members. With dedicated Speedflex studios in the works, the machine is to set be the next big thing for HIIT fans out there.

Healthy competition

With the rise of VR, our workouts have become increasingly 'gameified' over the past few years, and with the ever-present demand to make exercise more interesting, some classes have started introducing competition into the mix – a trend only set to increase for 2019. F45, the Australian fitness studio taking the world by storm, utilises a little (friendly) competition to keep people motivated in class. Using their in-house app LionHeart, they display participants' heart rates on leader boards around the studio, encouraging people to fight it out for the top spot, and even awarding points for effort after each session.

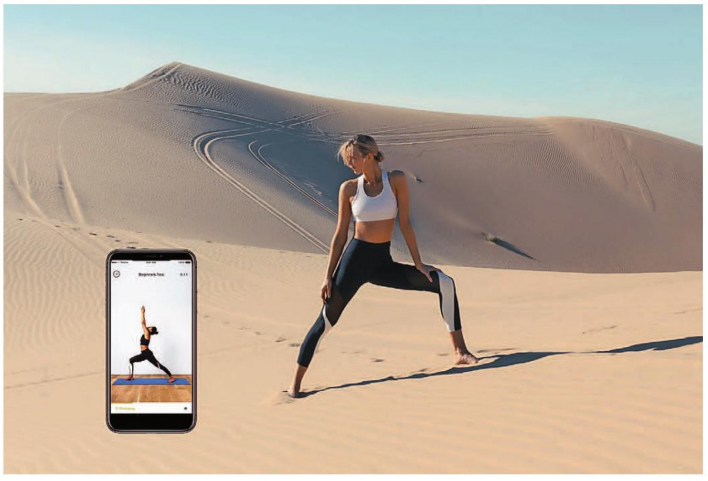
Stream sessions in the comfort of your own home

So long, Jane Fonda…

Where home workouts used to mean tiresome – and let's face it, sometimes impossible – dance routines, now almost every class available at a studio you can do from the comfort of your home. Les Mills now offer their popular classes at home, allowing members to stream their party-style sessions, while Fiit, another Netflix-style class streaming app, is offering individual training plans for 2019, providing those at home with a personalised approach formerly unique to in-person classes.

Our own Big Brother

The boom in wearable tech for fitness shows no sign of letting up as we head into 2019. The Fitbit, the Apple Watch and their many competitors have become fitness basics in the last couple of years, with devices used to track everything from activity and exercise, to food intake, weight and even how much we sleep. We have entered the era of Big Brother – but we're only monitoring ourselves.
Industry experts say that smart watches are just the beginning of the wearable technology boom – the next step will be smart fabrics. Companies like Wearable X are leading the way with their Nadi X Yoga Pants, smart yoga pants that connect to an app and guide you through your poses with vibrations and audio prompts – like a yoga teacher you can wear.



RIGHT:
Wearable X

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MAKING A SPLASH

Why The Gainsborough Bath Spa is perfect to wash away all the worries in the world

Words: MARK KEBBLE

What did the Romans ever do for us? Well, for one without them The Gainsborough Bath Spa would never have existed. And they certainly knew how to relax and let off a bit of steam, something I couldn't help thinking about as my shoulders were pummelled by a jet stream of water in the hotel's wonderful bathing area.

Bath has long been my favourite place in the UK to visit. I first visited The Gainsborough Bath Spa a few weeks after its initially opening three years ago. What was refreshing to see were a lot of familiar faces in the staff upon our arrival. Everything about the hotel screams luxury, from the marbled entrance way to the opulent reading room and the five star dining experience in Dan Moon's restaurant. Our room was incredibly comfortable, and the view wonderful – which included the rooftop hot water bath at the Thermae Bath Spa. Kudos to those hardy souls who were out on the Saturday morning when it was bucketing down with rain.

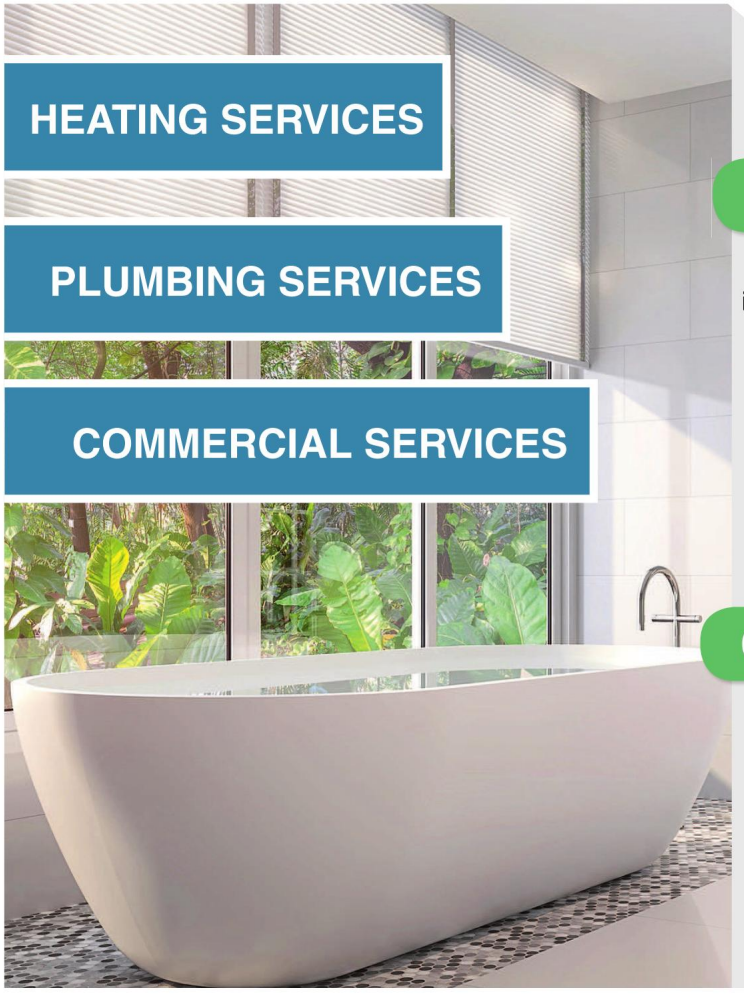
Upon arrival there was only one thing my wife and I wanted to do – relax. While she went to enjoy the many different facets of the baths, from the ice room to sauna, I headed off through underground hallways, up some steps and into the calm oasis of a massage room. At this time of year there are plenty of aches and pains to ease away, so take advantage of a bespoke approach to your treatment.

A quick snooze later and it was time to head to the snug bar for a pre-dinner drink and a look over the menu for the evening. You always know the head chef is one to watch when the restaurant is named after them and Dan Moon deserves this recognition, not to mention the three AA Rosettes that have come his way.

Shockingly, I have – at times – been called uncouth for passing up matching wines for a beer at dinner, but I was determined to prove that reputation to be an unfounded one. It did help that our sommelier was right on the ball with his suggestions to whatever dish we plumped for, and my mood was certainly boosted by the white, red and sweet dessert wine I enjoyed throughout the night. The food throughout was exemplary, but special mention goes to the stupendous Roast Creedy Carver duck.

Waking up a little fuzzy headed – I blame the wine I clearly was not accustomed to – there was nothing else for it than a trip to the baths before breakfast, but our short break was over all too soon. This is my fourth visit to Bath and I never tire of it. Having The Gainsborough to stay at certainly helps, a five star experience worthy of all the praise that comes its way. Romans, I thank you.

thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk



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FEELS LIKE HOME

The Gilpin Hotel and Lake House is a place that will make you feel more than welcome and very special indeed

Words: BETHAN ANDREWS

The Lake District happens to be one of my favourite places in the world, so imagine my delight at being able to visit The Gilpin Hotel and Lake House – a hotel that has, quite rightly, earned its reputation as one of the best properties in the vicinity. I've heard whispers about what makes it so special, but the overarching sense of relaxation, calm and tranquility were, for myself and my boyfriend, the very reason why we did not want to leave.

We stayed in the Lake House part of the hotel offering, set a few miles away from the larger site, The Gilpin, and hidden amidst the forest with views out over the atmospheric private lake. As you enter the gated property, you are met with the immediate feel of entering your own (not so humble) abode. With a no reception desk feel hallway, and instead a cosy, impeccably presented entrance that could have come straight out of the pages of a glossy interiors magazine, our first impressions of the Lake House were positive.

It only has six bedrooms and is therefore the ultimate in romantic escapism. Picture a mid-century modern style building, enveloped by acres of land and beautiful gardens. Then add a wooden hot tub, wooden jetty, boathouse and quaint rowing boats and you've got yourself a perfect idea of this hideaway – it really is as pretty as a picture.

And there is no need to leave once you've arrived (although if you do want to get out and about, Bowness on Windermere is only a short drive down the road), and you can entertain yourself with a jaunt around the lake or a row across. Completely embraced by the comfy arms of the Lake House, we stayed put. What I really liked about the hotel was that everything was on offer to everyone and you don't have to pay extra or book out one of the rowing boats or the hot tub.

On our first evening, after a relaxing read of the papers and abundance of magazines on offer in our bedroom, we were picked up by a chauffeur to go to Gilpin Spice, one of the restaurants at the other site. After a brief meeting with Bambi and an owl en route, we arrived to the most incredible hospitality and service, not to mention the fabulously tasty food. I can honestly say it is one of the best hotel restaurants I've ever eaten at, and it was refreshing to find that it wasn't simply British a la carte. Instead, it is a very trendy restaurant that is inspired by Cumbria having been at the centre of the spice trade. It features an open kitchen serving tapas-style pan-Asian dishes inspired by countries along the spice trail.

On our second day, we were surprised with the Jetty Spa Trail, an experience that I will never forget. We started by creating our own bespoke oils, before enjoying the pool area privately for an hour where we were served fruit juices and platters. Following this, we were treated to a massage, made all the better as we opened our eyes at the end to be greeted by floor to ceiling windows over the lake. Next up, and my personal favourite part, we were taken down to a little boathouse on the lake to have cream tea by the log burner. As if this wasn't special enough, our trail was finished with champagne in the hot tub as the mist rose and the sun then set over the lake.

The little personal touches that are always evident while you are at the Lake House made the stay very special for me. I felt at home, and truly felt that there wasn't anything more they could do. Of course, they had to blow it out of the water one last time, and on our final night we were chauffered across to HRiSHi, the Michelin star restaurant on the sister site. Hrishikesh Desai combines local produce and classic methods to deliver a beautiful feast.

For someone who really struggles to switch off and slow down, the Gilpin Hotel and Lake House encouraged me and allowed me to do exactly that – even on a wet and windy weekend. It felt like a miracle, and it's somewhere I will definitely be returning to again. ■

The Gilpin Lake House is available from £445 per night based on two adults sharing on a B&B basis; thegilpin.co.uk; 015394 88818

THE ATHENS REVIVAL

Greece has had its struggles, but Athens is a city on the cusp of a cultural renaissance

Words: VICTORIA PURCELL

'Everyone's an entrepreneur in Athens. You have to be,' says Greek-born, London-based Elena Torode, who is charged with showing us the contemporary side of a capital city more famous for its ancient history than its hip hangouts.

'Entrepreneurialism is intrinsically part of the Greek DNA,' she goes on to say, as we sit on the rooftop of the new Athens Marriott, sipping cocktails in the afternoon sun. 'Now we have a new age of entrepreneurs born out of the recession with amazing new ideas, but they're also transforming established ideas to keep up with the times.'

My interest is well and truly peaked and, one cocktail down with that heady I-got-up-at-4am-for-my-flight feeling, I'm eager to get out there and see it. And we start where all good holidays should – with a feast.

We head for the district of Metaxourgeio, a boho neighbourhood that has been quietly reinventing itself as the capital's creative quarter. Our destination is Aleria, a 10-minute drive from the Athens Marriott Hotel. And my, do these guys know how to lay on a feast.

The five-course tasting menu includes incredible culinary feats like beef tartar 'moussaka' with aubergine and crispy milk skin; couscous bourdeto with scorpion fish and squid; and pork cheeks with cauliflower, grape syrup and yuzu. The restaurant is set in a renovated neoclassical villa handed down to owner Nikiforos Kechadiadakis by his parents. Despite having no experience in the industry, he decided to turn the property into a restaurant when he was just 23, and now the place is listed among the best restaurants in Europe.

After dinner, and a few too many glasses of fine Greek wine, we pour out into the cool autumnal air and slip through narrow, tree-lined streets where run-down buildings and street

The Acropolis of Athens. Below: The new Athens Marriott Hotel. Bottom: Mikrolimano marina in Piraeus

TRIP NOTES:
Rooms at Athens Marriott Hotel on Syngrou Avenue start from €106 per night. To book see marriott.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: SHANSCHE/GETTY IMAGES PLUS; MILANGONDA/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

art combine to create a unique vibe. We arrive at Beauty Killed the Beast, a very Dalston-esque cocktail bar, where we sip mastiqua and cocktails until around midnight. The day's early alarm call has us all yearning for sleep, but for the locals, the evening was just getting started – and it's only Monday.

There's evidence of the Athens Revival, as us media types have labelled it, in Piraeus – the capital's major port – too. Much like London's docklands, the area's links to shipping and trade have seen it prosper, falter and prosper again. The current trajectory seems to be very much upward, and we spend a morning here sampling traditionally made Greek coffee at Loumidis on Tsamadou street. We're given a demo of how to prepare the world-famous 'black gold' (it's heated over hot sand in a small copper pot called a 'briki'), and we lap it up. Loumidis is one of Greece's top coffee purveyors, and it's a perfect example of how humble traditions are being reinvented for the luxury market. Inside the store there's a plethora of artisan produce born of the coffee bean.

Next door at Miran deli, we sample cured meats, cheese (Greece, apparently, has as many varieties as France, if not more) and tsiporo, which is similar to raki. We also try spoon sweets and Greek yoghurt at a nearby health food store full of honey, nuts and other local delights.

Then we wander off towards the area's two smaller harbours: Zea Marina, with its smattering of luxury yachts, pretty waterside promenade and waterfront restaurants; and Mikrolimano, which is mostly populated by fishing boats and seafront tavernas that provide the perfect setting for a lazy Sunday brunch.

The Athens Marriott Hotel is the ideal base for exploring Piraeus. It's located in Kallithea, a 10-minute drive from the port and 15-minutes from the Acropolis. Right next door to the hotel is the impressive Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre.

Designed by Renzo Piano and completed in 2016, the vast, contemporary glass and concrete sculpture – home of the National Library of Greece and the Greek National Opera – was made possible by a £496 million donation from the charity foundation set up after the death of billionaire Greek shipping tycoon, Stavros Niarchos.

Kallithea translates literally as 'beautiful view', and arriving at the site, Piano asked, 'Where is the beauty? Where is the view?'. The site, an old parking lot left over from the frenzied stadium building ahead of the 2004 Athens Olympics, is blocked from the sea by a spaghetti junction of messy roads. And so the architect set about restoring the beauty, and the view, by creating a lush, sloped parkland that reaches up to the centre's viewing platforms. It's a beautiful place for a stroll, some light watersports on the man-made lake or an alfresco coffee with a dramatic panorama of the city and the sea.

The Athens Marriott Hotel, launched in October 2018, marks the brand's re-entry into the Greek market after a five year absence – another sign that the capital's resurgence as a destination is gathering pace.

The hotel has 366 rooms and suites with contemporary interiors, chic bathrooms and, in my case, a generous terrace granting views of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre and the coastline.

There's also a small-but-perfectly-formed rooftop pool and two restaurants: Made in Athens restaurant, inspired by Athenian marketplaces; and e&o Athens, up on the rooftop, which serves contemporary pan-Asian cuisine.

Think Athens and you think of the Acropolis – especially if you've just been watching *The Little Drummer Girl* on BBC One – or you might think of the Athens Riviera (glorious by British standards but 'kinda meh' by Greek standards, I'm told). Or perhaps you've headed straight for the port to hop on a Santorini-bound ferry? Well, let the city of Athens pass you by no more; there's a revival to explore. ■

SUSTAINABLY SPECIAL

The brand new Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort will blow you away with its eco-friendly initiatives, personal touches and location within the Baa Atoll

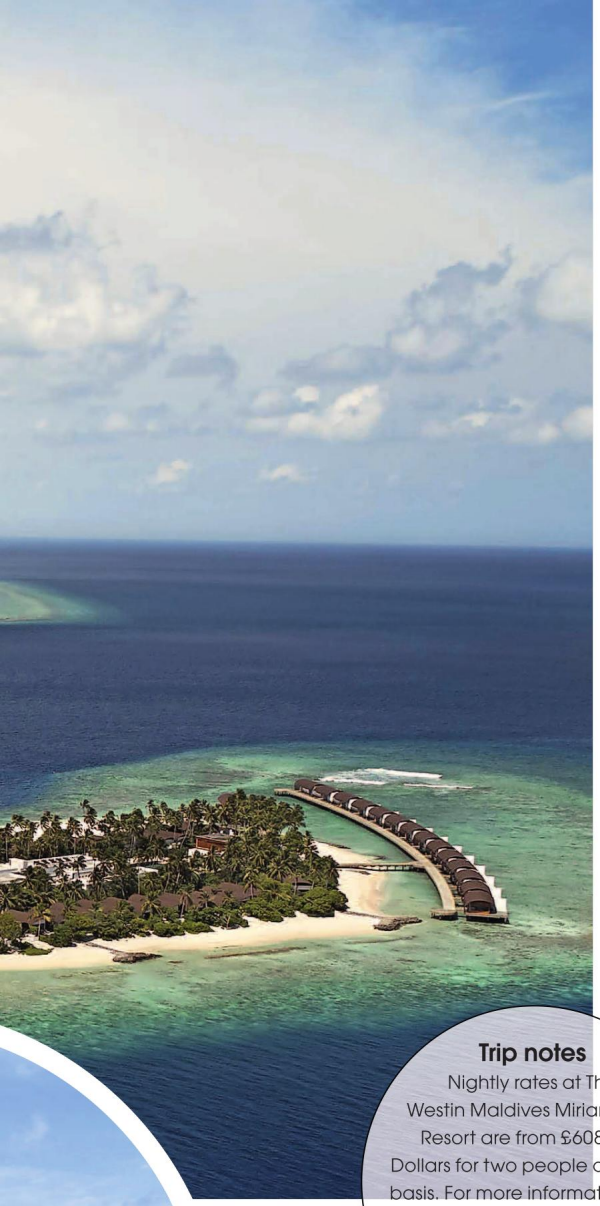
Words: BETHAN ANDREWS

As I swooped down onto a paradise island from the sea plane that had transported me from Male airport, I couldn't help but pinch myself and feel like the luckiest woman alive to be able to witness from above the sheer beauty of the Maldives. Watching the calming patterns of the ocean and the islands as they erupt out of the water creates a feeling inside that I just can't explain – a window seat you must have!

It's fair to say that the Maldives in general is a pretty special place, and many of the resorts situated within this beautiful part of the world are stunning – largely to do with their lucky locations. But I can hand on heart say that the new Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort, presented with a focus on wellness and sustainability, is one of the most wonderful places I've had the pleasure of stepping foot on. And it is not only due to its second to none location, but because the island is a master in welcoming you, accommodating and spoiling you, teaching you about the world in which it sits and, most importantly, protecting the world around it. In my eyes, the Westin Maldives is not trying to be different or add something extra such as slides and underwater bedrooms, but it still *is* different. The resort has managed to set itself apart from the rest by simply being.

The Westin Maldives is nestled on a beautiful coral island in the Baa Atoll, a designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve site and a location only 18km from landmarks such as the Hanifaru Bay, which is known for the largest gathering of manta rays globally. But don't worry about timing your trip to suit the above manta ray explosion, as the saying 'there are plenty more fish in the sea' couldn't ring more true here. The snorkelling excursions that can be arranged through the resort are a wonderful way of exploring the oceans of this incredible slice of planet earth.

I was lucky enough to experience this straight from my overwater villa as well. Merely a hop, skip and a jump from my heavenly bed (more on that later!), and I'm entering the crystal clear waters from my private terrace. Although sadly much of the coral



has been bleached as a result of the warming oceans, there is still so much to see. From stingrays to colourful fish (you can ask the dive centre for a fish encyclopedia so that you know exactly what you are looking at), to turtles as well, it really is the most incredible underwater world. Miriandhoo is, in fact, a turtle sanctuary, so you can easily and often see turtles nesting along the white beaches. Reef sharks, lionfish, manta rays and whale sharks all reside in the Baa Atoll as well.

And if you are lucky, you'll see the resident dolphins go parading past. They happened to love the channel outside of my villa, so I was treated to 20 dolphins somersaulting and flipping for me a few mornings a week and, let me tell you, it is one of the most beautiful, humbling events to watch. However, one of the best ways to see these wonderful creatures is to book onto a dolphin cruise and, hopefully, they'll arrive and dance along in the wake of the boat for you.

But back to the heavenly bed – sleep is something that certainly comes naturally here. The Westin brand were the first hotel brand to create a signature mattress and the bed is uniquely designed with plush, pillow-top construction for premium comfort and support.

In total, the resort features 70 stunning villas and suites, 41 on island and 29 overwater. Each villa is shaped with an eco-friendly double roofing to create the perfect natural ventilation. Poised over the sea on stilts and with an area of almost 200 square metres each, the overwater suites are among the largest a resort has to offer in the Baa Atoll region. Plus, they come complete with touches such as orange presses in the rooms, so that you can make yourself a fresh orange juice every morning while taking in the blue views ahead of you.

When it comes to interior design in general, the Westin Maldives has got it completely right. Design led, the resort blends uniquely but seamlessly with the environment around it and mirrors the incredible nature outside its perimeter. Led by award-winning Milan-based architects PEIA Associati, the design takes inspiration from the ocean with a visionary approach towards environmental sustainability. Many of the features, including a breathtakingly beautiful feature staircase out of the main dining area, evoke ideas of the natural environment – in this case, making you think of a shell.

All elements of the resort's design uses natural materials as its stimulus, such as the movement and flow of marine life including sea turtles and whale sharks, providing guests with a link to the region's exceptional enchantment. An aerial view of The Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort reveals an outline in the shape of a fish, a distinctive reflection of the beauty of surrounding marine life; while the arrival jetty is structured to resemble clamshells and the oceans' waves. I felt a lot of the design was very refreshing, having steered away from the white-washed, minimal interiors that many resorts have succumbed to recently.

While on the topic of refreshing, the food on this island is some of the best I've had the pleasure of tasting. I often feel that resorts play it safe when it comes to their dining, and although often still incredibly tasty, that they attempt to simply cater for all as opposed to creating a one-off, entirely special dining experience. Executive chef Jason Millar (who has worked with Raymond Blanc and Jason Atherton) has managed to really push the boat out here, and each separate food offering is second to none. I love that there is a big emphasis on celebrating the talents and the cuisine of the locals, and the staff are knowledgeable, talented and incredibly passionate. You can choose between the Hawker restaurant for an authentic, sand on the feet street food experience, Island Kitchen for a well thought out feast, or the jewel in the crown, Pearl, the Japanese fine dining restaurant. You can honestly ask for anything, and they didn't struggle to cater for the various dietary requirements within our group – from no egg to no gluten, to simply a preference for oat milk with one's coffee.

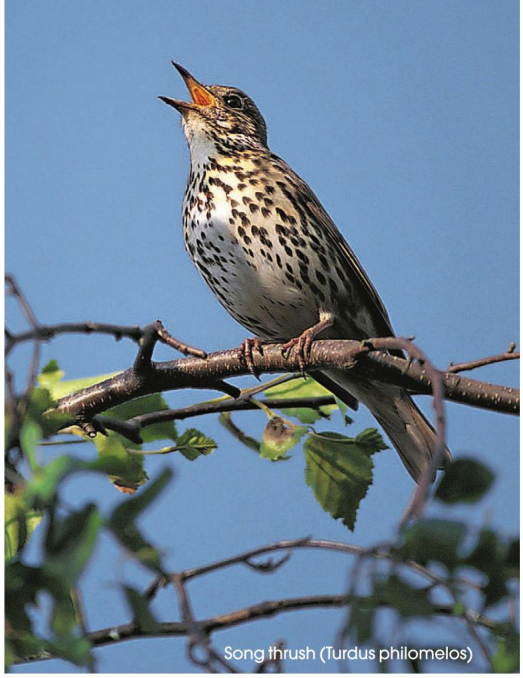
Another place on the island whereby you can ask for all of your troubles to be washed away is in the Heavenly Spa. Again, I loved that the environment took centre stage, as I was asked to choose out of a box my favourite shell to accompany my massage. I went for the shell that symbolised hope, and I was asked to focus on that as my stresses were all taken away from me. As I was treated to a private dining experience on the beach on the final night, with waves lapping around me, I smiled at the fact that this incredibly luxurious escape was one that has its environment in its heart at all times – something often rare to come across in this market.

It's sustainable and it is special, and something tells me it will be a firm fixture on the travel lists of many for many, many years to come. And my new answer for where my favourite place in the world is? Definitely, right in the middle of the Baa Atoll. ■

Trip notes

Nightly rates at The Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort are from £608/800 Dollars for two people on a B&B basis. For more information or to book visit marriott.com/hotels/travel/mlewi-the-westin-maldives-miriandhoo-resort

Greenfinch (Carduelis chloris, male)


Song thrush (Turdus philomelos)

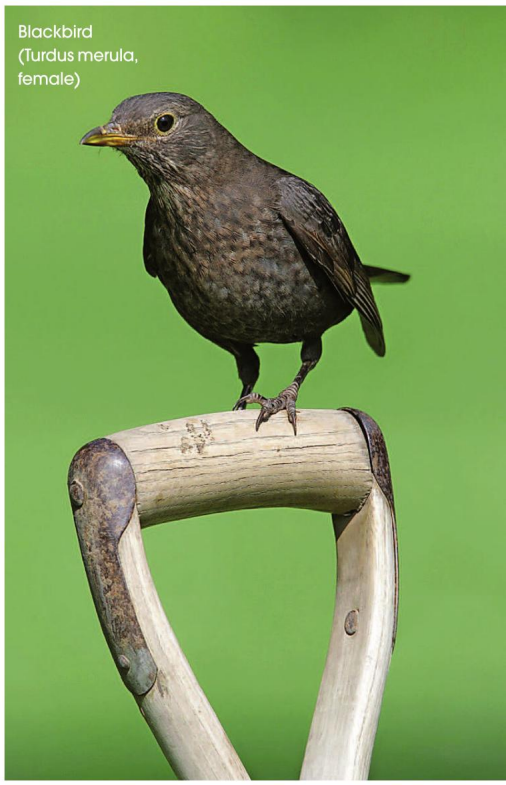
Dunnock (Prunella modularis)

Blue tit (Parus caeruleus)

A Bird's Eye View

In 1979, the RSPB first asked children to count the birds in their garden to work out our most popular species. Forty years on and it's the biggest garden wildlife science survey in the UK

Words: ELLIE FELLS


Blackbird (Turdus merula, female)

Collared dove (Streptopelia decaocto)

Robin (Erithacus rubecula)

House sparrow (Passer domesticus)

ABOVE: Wood pigeon (Columba palumbus)

Birds are a part of our landscape. Whether it's a robin signifying that winter is here, the pigeons that are part of our towns, or the seagulls that are an ever-present threat to ice-creams at the seaside, our environment seems to be teeming with them. However, keeping track of their species and numbers is no easy feat, which is why the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) are calling on members of the public to help.

Every January, the organisation holds their Big Garden Birdwatch, a nationwide campaign that asks members of the public to count the birds in their garden over an hour-long period. This year the Birdwatch will be between 26-28 January, but 2019 is extra special because it marks the Birdwatch's 40th anniversary. 'It's incredible that a wildlife survey has been running for that long,' Emily Kench, the project manager, reflects. It all began in 1979, when the RSPB were looking for a way to get the younger generation involved with wildlife, so they suggested that children got in touch and told them about the birds they could see in their garden. 'The TV presenter Biddy Baxter loved the idea so much that she featured it on *Blue Peter*, and it just took off from there,' Kench explains. The campaign has evolved to encompass all ages, and 40 years on an incredible eight million hours have been spent watching birds across the nation.

A free pack for recording your results is available to download on the RSPB website, and results can then be submitted online or by post. However, crucially you are only counting the maximum number of birds at any one time to avoid recording the same bird more than once. The RSPB are also encouraging watchers to note down other types of wildlife too, such as badgers, foxes, squirrels and frogs, helping them to gain a more wide-ranging picture of who calls our gardens home. A parallel event, The Schools Big Garden Birdwatch, will also be taking place throughout this month. 'It gets children out into the playground, where they then count the birds they see,' Kench says, with the aim of encouraging our younger generation to take an interest in protecting our birds.

Once the results have been submitted, they will be analysed by a team of scientists and used to direct future conservation. 'The data gives us a really good idea of what's happening with our garden bird numbers so that we can identify crucial trends,' Kench explains. It is thanks to findings from the Big Garden Birdwatch that the RSPB have been able to identify a decrease in the numbers of the song thrush, for example. 'In 1979, the song thrush was in the top ten list of birds, but by 2009 its numbers had halved,' Kench says. 'The Birdwatch has also revealed an increase in the number of collared doves and wood pigeons over the last 40 years.' As well as forming a crucial part of our ecosystem, birds can be an indicator of how the wider environment is doing, hence why keeping track of their numbers is so important. 'If a particular species is decreasing, that can show that their food source isn't doing well and therefore point to a wider issue,' Kench adds.

However, how can we do our bit to help our birds all year round? 'Feeding them is a really good way to help,' Kench advises. 'You can give them all kinds of things like peanuts, fat balls and leftovers from your kitchen.' She also suggests putting out water in a shallow dish, especially during very cold or hot weather. These simple things will help to ensure that birds remain regular visitors to our gardens.

'Feeding them is a really good way to help'

Visit rspb.org.uk to get involved, and this year the RSPB are asking people to share their Birdwatch stories on social media using the hash-tag #howwillyoubiggardenbirdwatch

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FREEDOM *TO* LEARN

A TALKING TRADITION

This month will see National Storytelling Week take place, an event that aims to show this age-old tradition is as relevant now as ever

Words: ELLIE FELLS

For many of us, the words 'once upon a time' will take us back to our infant school days. However, the ancient art of story-telling is by no means something that should be rooted in childhood, and sharing tales with one another can have hugely positive impacts on both the young and old.

The Society for Storytelling works to keep this tradition alive. Founded as a charity in 1993, the Society now consists of 220 professional story tellers. 'The idea was that the Society would help to promote storytelling across the country,' their chair, Paul Jackson, explains. Their flagship event is an annual National Storytelling Week, which this year is taking place between 26 January and 2 February; the week will see organisations from across the country come together to practice this art form, with hundreds of events taking place everywhere from community centres through to Westminster Abbey.

Schools across the country are being encouraged to take part in the week, with the hope that the sharing of stories will be beneficial to both a child's learning, and to their mental health. 'Whenever I go into schools and tell children a story, I ask how it makes them feel. They always say something like, "It's relaxing",' Jackson reflects. Telling stories to each other is a way of getting children to take a step away from their computer screens and mobile phones, encouraging communication and the use of their imagination. 'We want children to create their own stories,' Jackson adds, with the Society urging teachers to give their students the freedom to tell whatever narratives they like.

PHOTO: DGLIMAGES / GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

However, National Storytelling Week certainly isn't restricted to the younger generation. 'Story tellers will go out into small community groups, nursing homes, sheltered housing, to people who don't have housing at all,' Jackson says. Coming together to share stories is a great way of reducing loneliness, creating a feeling of belonging. 'It's not just the phrase "everyone has a story to tell", but rather that every story is important to that particular person,' Jackson explains. He adds that it is especially beneficial for those suffering from dementia, with the hope that telling stories will help in linking together fond, fragmented memories. 'During the time in that story people can be taken out of their troubles,' he says. Anyone can get involved with National Storytelling Week, and information packs for holding your own event are available to download on the Society's website. There's no time like the present.

Find out more at sfs.org.uk, and if you are interested in organising an event, email membership@sfs.org.uk

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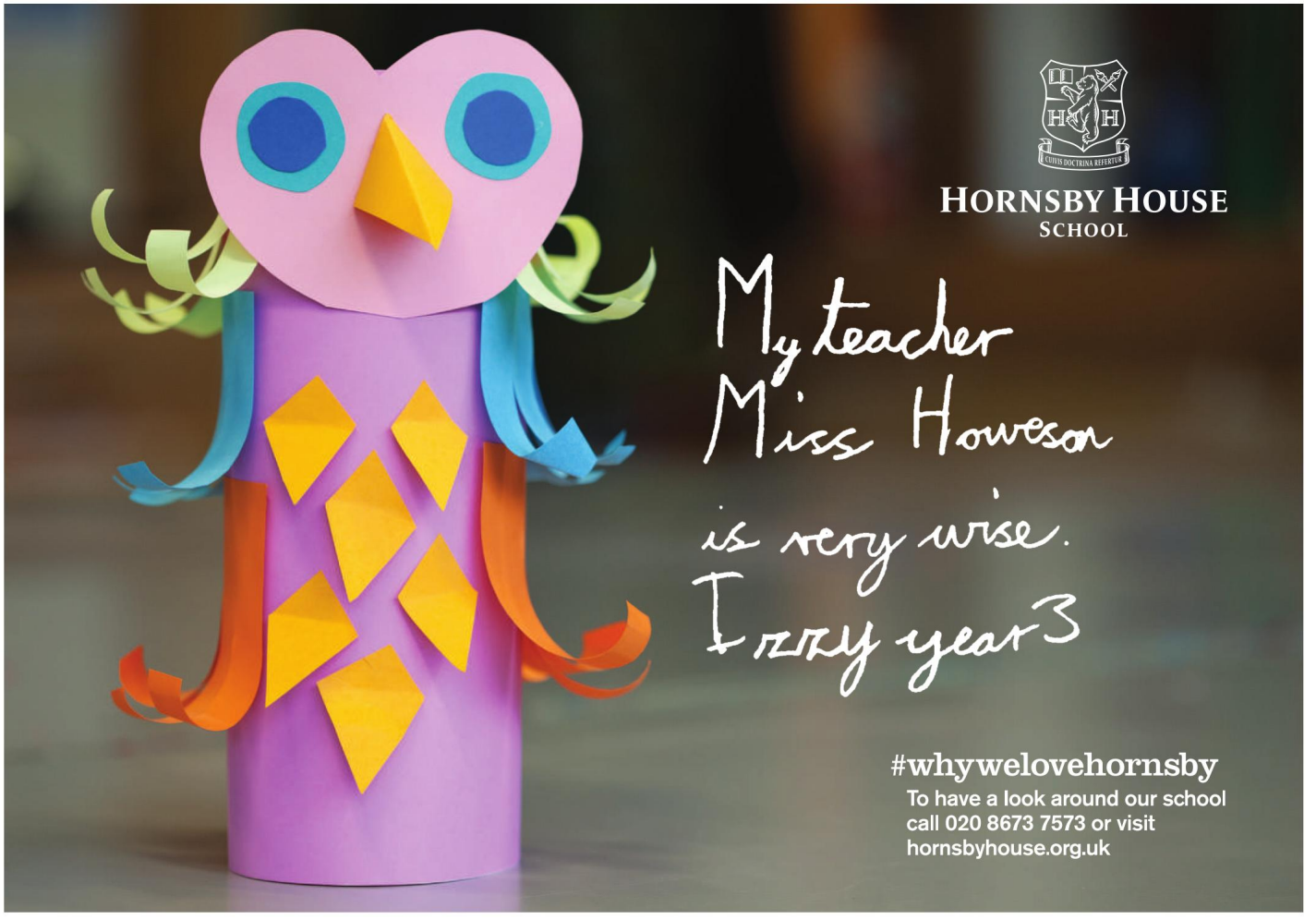

AN ALTERNATIVE VISION

Achievement and happiness can go hand in hand says All Hallows Head, Dr Trevor Richards

I was startled to read a report recently which asserted that there is an 'achievement/happiness trade-off' in education with some traditional teaching methods boosting pupil achievement, but making children unhappy. As an educationalist and a child psychologist, I truly believe that happiness and achievement can and should go hand in hand. Ensuring our children's well-being provides the best atmosphere for them to learn and grow and indeed to lay down firm foundations for thriving in future life.

In that report for the Think Tank for the Centre for Education Economics, Gabriel Heller-Sahlgren maintains that approaches such as teacher-led teaching, competition for school entry, an emphasis on academic knowledge and a highly competitive learning environment can all boost pupils' test scores but do 'make learning less joyful'. He goes on to claim that policymakers and stakeholders need to undertake a cost/benefit analysis to prioritise whether pupil achievement in assessments should take precedence, due to its hypothetical correlation with economic performance, or pupil happiness, as this is linked to adult life satisfaction.

I had hoped that the education debate had moved past such blunt analysis and binary thinking. What about the outcomes of education that are not easily measured, but are increasingly highly prized by employers, such as innovative thinking, creativity, problem-solving, flexibility, positive mind-sets, strong values and collaborative skills? What about the notion that if children are really flourishing and engrossed in their learning, they will perform at their very best, be challenged and fulfilled and happy? I certainly believe we can ensure effective learning at All Hallows – in every area of child development – and nurture our children's well-being.

Our creative approach to education is very much part of this process. The element of risk-taking which comes with originality not only helps our young people learn as they make mistakes along the way but, by teaching them to embrace those mistakes, it can foster resilience and a mentally healthy mindset. Parents and teachers can fall into the trap of thinking creativity is linked solely to artistic skills, but it's not. Neither is it about demoting the importance of academic disciplines. Creativity is also about being able to look at a problem, research ideas, and develop solutions as an individual or as a group through collaboration.

Perhaps there are areas of this country and within education internationally where parents and schools are happy to trade-off happiness in favour of achievement, but I never want that to be the case at All Hallows. Indeed, the amazing outcomes achieved by our pupils can be attributed to the very fact that ensuring their well-being lies at the heart of everything we do. Year on year, our pupils have had outstanding success on entry to a wide range of top senior schools both in the South West and across the UK. The astounding array of scholarships and awards they have gained, in all areas of school life including academic, sport, creative design, art, music and all-round, has prompted our Governors to celebrate the school's creativity with the introduction of an exciting new Creative Scholarship with free weekly boarding. A decision which has perhaps been rightly justified by the school's subsequent shortlisting for the TES Independent Schools 2019 Creativity Award. ■

For more information about All Hallows and the Creative Scholarship, please contact Jackie on 01749 881609 or via email at admissions@allhallowsschool.co.uk

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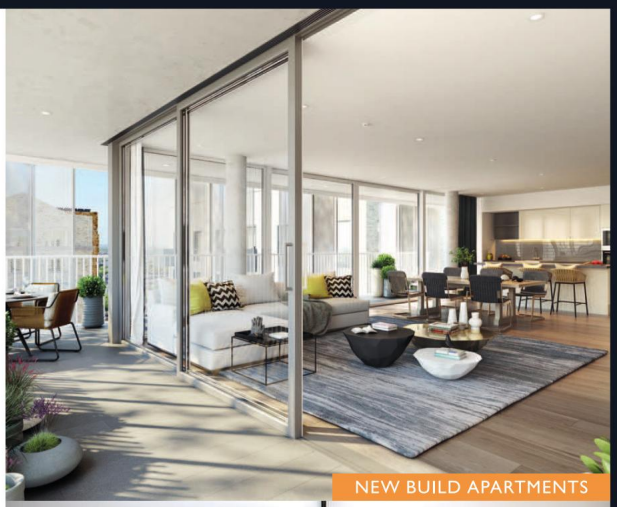

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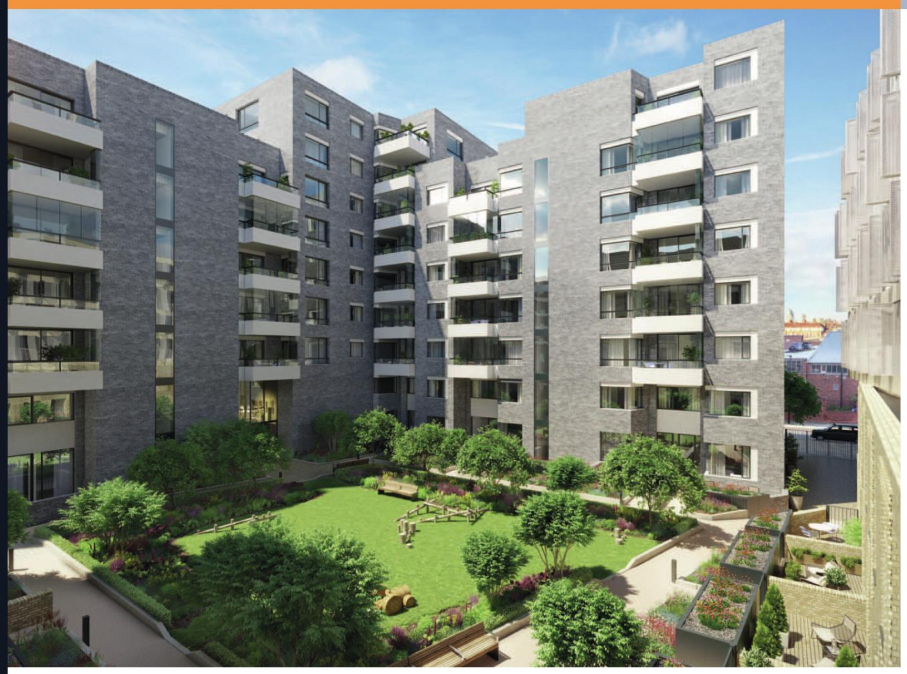

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HOME OF THE MONTH

SHOWSTOPPER

Designed by the world renowned architect Sir Terry Farrell CBE, Drum House is an exceptional modernist home that has just been the subject of a painstaking and exquisite refurbishment programme, completed in 2018. There is a real depth of quality and thoughtfulness to the remedial works, including the installation of four superbly appointed bathrooms and a beautiful Bulthaup kitchen. Totalling an impressive 6,863 square feet the house has a wonderful lateral footprint and is arranged over just two levels, with uncluttered and exciting spaces. **Drum House, Richmond is on the market for £7.5m; savills.co.uk**

NEW YEAR, NEW MOVE

London has much to offer buyers in 2019

Words: FIONA BRANDHORST

Privacy, access to local shops and amenities, digital connectivity and public transport will be among the top reasons for moving this year, according to Strutt & Parker's latest Housing Futures research. Even in the digital age, more people wanted to be close to family and friends, up from 37 per cent to 48 per cent since 2013, says the report. Big cities like London have become more popular as a preferred location to live. Walking to work was also seen as an increasingly attractive option, up from 25 per cent to 36 per cent. 'City dwellers don't have long commutes to work and can enjoy walking to a local café or the gym,' adds Vanessa Hale, Director of Research at Strutt & Parker. 'In today's hectic times, this is the lifestyle many people want.'

Orlando Rodriguez, Design Director at luxury London developer Northacre, predicts that with fewer people owning cars in the capital, car parking spaces will become redundant. 'I see a business opportunity focused on using these subterranean spaces,' he suggests. 'The obsession with gadgets in the home is also waning. Older buyers need to ask their children for help to use iPads to control heating and lighting. We need to keep it simple.'

This year, you'll be hearing the word 'newstalgia' to describe new residential schemes keeping a foot in their past. Pinks Mews by luxury boutique developer Sons & Co is a fine example. The secluded gated development, comprising 35 luxurious apartments set in the heart of Holborn, is accessed through a private walkway and retains the exterior walls of the Victorian alms houses which once stood on the site. A vibrant mix of old and new featuring state-of-the-art interior design and modern technology, Pinks Mews is opposite the attractive 19th century Gothic-style Prudential Assurance Building. Prices start from £995,000 for a first floor

Pictured clockwise from top left: One Park Drive exterior and a Loft Apartment; Floral Court; Richmond Chase; Pinks Mews, inside and out

one-bedroom apartment on the market with CBRE.

The Floral Court Collection by Capco in Covent Garden also marries modern architecture with the conservation and restoration of heritage buildings and is moments from top designer stores and eateries. The grand entrance hall and concierge lobby, located in the former boardroom of the 18th century Westminster Fire Office, charms visitors instantly. The 31 boutique studio, one, two and three bedroom apartments including one penthouse are set around a new courtyard and many feature a terrace or balcony, oases in this central part of town. Prices start from £1.3m.

Drawing on the period architecture of nearby Richmond Village, the Georgian and Victorian-style new homes at Richmond Chase are bang up to the 21st century inside and equally at home with the manicured landscaping and paved avenues outside. Three, four and five-bedroom houses by Berkeley Homes start from £1.48m.

The Help to Buy equity loan scheme has been pivotal for sales in London, so the recent government announcement that it will be extended for first time buyers from 2021 until 2023 has been welcomed. Knight Frank has just launched three new east London schemes offering the government incentive at Bow Common Lane near Mile End Park, Douro next to Olympic Park and Upton Gardens, the former home of West Ham United FC. Andrew Groocock, Knight Frank Canary Wharf, comments: 'The pace and pipeline of development in the area has accelerated in the last decade making these areas very different places to what they were 30 years ago.'

In south west London, Teddington Riverside is a new luxury waterfront development located on the site of the iconic Teddington Film Studios, overlooking Teddington Lock. Most of the apartments have balconies or terraces and many enjoy outstanding views of the River Thames. Trains from nearby Teddington Station reach Waterloo in 36 minutes. Knight Frank is selling a one-bedroom apartment for £770,000.

One Park Drive is architect Herzog & de Meuron's first UK residential project at Wood Wharf, the newest district on Canary Wharf's private estate. Positioned at the head of the dock on 23 acres of reclaimed land, the striking 58 storey circular tower offers 438 apartments in three distinct living zones: the Loft, Cluster and Bay apartments. Each has stunning views, a private balcony, designed to not be overlooked by its neighbour, and dedicated residents' amenities including a health club, cinema and library arranged across the first floor. Prices start from £825,000.

One thing's for certain, there won't be many dull moments in the London property market this year. ■

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Salford Road,
London
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£550,000

An attractive, two double bedroom period conversion with views of the local area that can be truly enjoyed from the original feature bay window. The property has an open-plan kitchen / living room which provides an elegant balance of contemporary finishings and timeless characteristics.

Sternhold Avenue,
London
SW2
£725,000

Located in a desirable residential street 0.9 miles from Balham station, this three bedroom, modern maisonette takes position on the first floor of a period property. Energy Efficiency Rating: D

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Putney

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Dover House Road,
Putney, London
SW15
£625,000

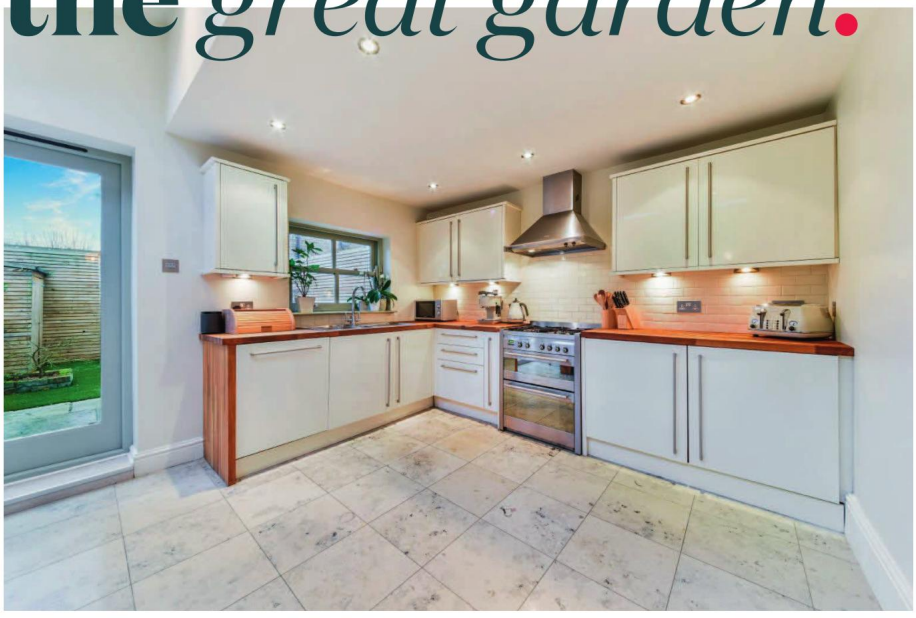
On entering the property you will be greeted by a reception room on your right which leads through to the kitchen and second reception room. Both the second reception and kitchen have access to the 32' garden. Upstairs there are three double bedrooms and a family bathroom and a separate WC Energy Efficiency Rating: D

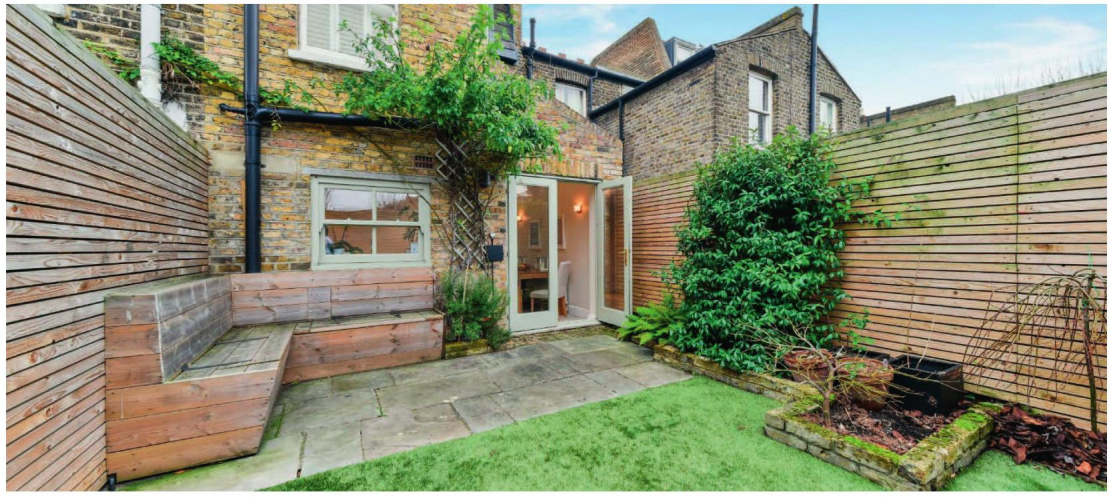
Stroud Crescent,
Putney, London
SW15
£508,000

The ground floor comprises a good size kitchen/breakfast room which leads to the living room with double doors to the patio area and garden providing ideal entertaining space. Upstairs there are three good size bedrooms which are serviced by a well-appointed shower room. Energy Efficiency Rating: D

The house with the *great garden*.

Knight Frank





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Set back from the road behind a large front garden, a Victorian terraced family house arranged over four floors with five bedrooms and three bathrooms. There is a double reception room and a full width kitchen/dining room which leads to the rear garden with a patio terrace.

Elms Crescent is a premier road in the heart of Abbeville Village and close to excellent local shops, bars and restaurants, convenient for Clapham Common and the tube at Clapham South, energy rating d.

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Freshford Street, SW18

£1,150,000 FREEHOLD

FOUR BEDROOMS, LARGE GARDEN, TWO BATHROOMS

This four bedroom Edwardian house has a spacious and well presented main reception room, beautifully presented kitchen which is open plan to a dining area and a second reception area offering an excellent entertaining space. There are bi-folding doors leading out to a landscaped garden.

Located on a popular road in Earlsfield, Freshford Street is close to Earlsfield mainline station and Garratt Lane with its vast array of shops, bars and restaurants, energy rating c.

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Jacksons

Hydethorpe Road, SW12

£1,225,000 FREEHOLD

FOUR BEDROOMS, FULLY EXTENDED, SOUTH FACING GARDEN

A fully extended four bedroom Victorian house with two bathrooms. This stunning family home has been extended to create a vast open plan kitchen/breakfast room to the rear as well as a double reception room to the front. The loft has been fully converted to create a large master bedroom and bathroom.

Hydethorpe Road is a popular residential road located in the desirable Hyde Farm Estate. The mainline and underground stations are close by and a vast array of shops, bars and restaurants, energy rating d.

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Wyatt Park Road, SW2

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This beautifully presented five bedroom Edwardian house is arranged over three floors. The property has a large open plan kitchen with bi-folding doors leading onto a garden, ideal for a family. Avoca Road is located close to Tooting Bec station with direct access to the city, energy rating e.

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Burntwood Lane, SW17

£3,000 PER MONTH

FOUR BEDROOMS, TWO RECEPTION ROOMS, GARDEN

A four double bedroom terraced house with private rear garden and off-street parking. There are two reception rooms, a separate kitchen and a conservatory area which is perfect for dining. This property is suited for either a family or professional sharers, energy rating e.

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Higham House West, Fulham SW6

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Kitchen | Reception room | Master bedroom with en suite bathroom and dressing room | Two further bedrooms | Two bathrooms | Wraparound terrace

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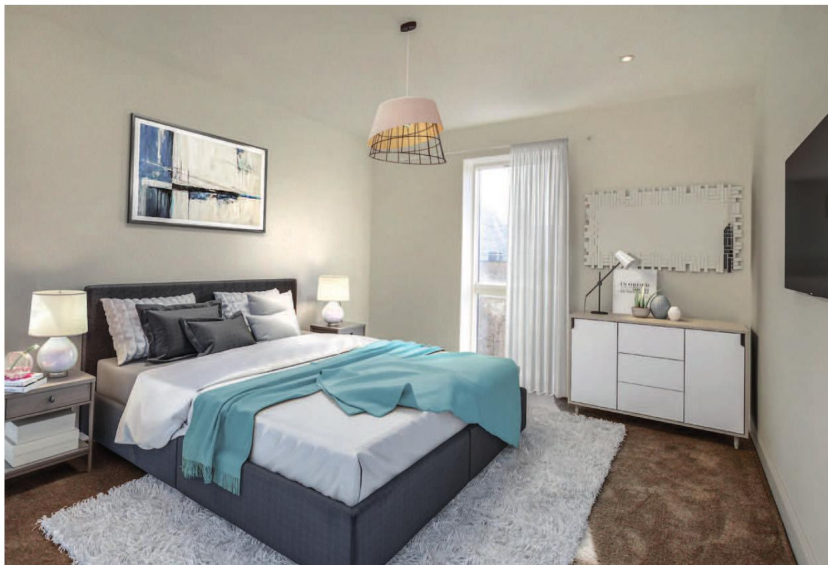

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Dulwich Village office: 020 8702 8111

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An extremely spacious one bedroom flat close to the centre of Forest Hill to let. The flat comprises a spacious lounge, double bedroom with fitted storage, beautifully presented dining area which leads onto the kitchen and a large private garden to the rear. EPC: E

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Dulwich Village office: 020 8702 8111

Durban Road, SE27
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